

William Davison

THE
Gentleman Instructed,
K IN THE
CONDUCT
Of a VIRTUOUS and HAPPY
LIFE.

IN THREE PARTS.

Written for the INSTRUCTION of a
YOUNG NOBLEMAN.

To which is added, *as*
A WORD to the LADIES,
By WAY of
SUPPLEMENT to the First Part.

The Eighth Edition.

L O N D O N :

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Gentlemen's Library

THE

COLLECTION

OF VOLUMES AND PAPERS

RELATIVE TO THE

IN THREE VOLUMES

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY

TOMAS MOBLERMAN

2

TO THE

A Word to the LADIES

By the Author

Supplement to the First Part

Second Edition

LONDON

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at the Edinburgh and London



To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

EDWARD,
Lord Viscount Cornbury, &c.

AND

Baron Clifton of Leighton-
Bromswould;

SON and HEIR-APPARENT of
EDWARD, Earl of Clarendon, &c.

My LORD,



Formerly presented Your Lord-
ship with the First Volume
of this Book, and for the
same Reason, I now present
it again entire in all its Parts
to You, because it was made for You, I
mean for Gentlemen of Your Noble Cha-
racter; and because, I believe, the per-
sal

The DEDICATION.

sal of it will both profit and delight You :
But more especially, My LORD, I
make You a Present of it, to give Your
Lordship an Assurance of the unfeigned De-
sires I have, that You should be Good, as
well as Great, and to testify thereby to the
World, the great Respect I have for Your
Noble Family ; of which Your Lordship
cannot fail to be the great Ornament, as
well as the Glory of Your Country, if You
take this Book for Your Companion, and
Eusebius, the Noble Author of it, for
Your Guide.

My LORD, I had the Honour to be long
acquainted with My Lord Your Grand-fa-
ther, and I had the Happiness, and Blessing,
to be bred up in the Family of Your Great
Grand-father of immortal Memory, I mean
in the most Famous University of Oxford,
to which, after a long Night of Ignorance,
in Times which his incomparable Pen hath
described, he restored true Learning and
Discipline, to the great Benefit of the Church,
and Kingdom, and governed it, all the time
he was Chancellor of it, with the Care,
Affection, and Authority of a Father ; and,
My LORD, I very believe, that of those,
who

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who were then Students in the University, there is not a Man of any Rank, or Profession, now living, who doth not reverence his Memory, and wish all Happiness to his Noble Family, and particularly to Your Lordship, who bear his Name, and who, we all hope, will follow his great Example, and that of another in every Respect as Great, and Good, I mean the Example, of Your Heroick other Great Grand-father, my Lord CAPELL, of most Venerable, and Immortal Memory.

To that End, my LORD, this Book, now compleated by the Author, comes to wait upon You in the Fifth Edition; which I mention to Your Lordship, to let You understand, that it must be a Book of more than common Value, which in so Critical an Age, hath made its way so often in its several Parts through the World without any other Testimony, or Commendation, but that of its own intrinsick Worth.

Wherefore, My LORD, I do not desire You to read it over, for that would be a Disparagement to it, and all the Parts of it; I only desire your Lordship to taste it, to read as small a Part of it as You please,

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and then to forbear reading the whole Collection, if You can. I dare say, My LORD, when You have begun, You will no more be able not to go through the Whole, than if You were to read the best Dramatick Composition as ever was made, You could give off at the First Act, and not proceed to the End of the Fifth. It is not without Reason, My LORD, that I liken this Book to a Play; for indeed it is a sort of Drama, written in Dialogue, without Numbers, in which several Persons under feigned Names, express several Humours, and as it were, act several Parts; and, as in a true Play, in which the Poet designs to profit, as much as to please, and to couch a Noble Moral in the Plot, this bright and serious Dramatist in Prose, the wise Eusebius, whose Piety in his Book is equal to his Wit, designs through the whole of it to render Virtue amiable, and venerable, and most becoming the Profession, and Practice of Gentlemen, and to represent Vice in its natural Features, as hateful and ridiculous, and most dishonourable and reproachful to Gentlemen of all Ranks, describing all along the Vanities, and Follies, and Madness of the World, and disco-

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discovering the sinful Arts and Snares, and Temptations of it in such a delightful and convincing Manner, that it must be said of every one, who can turn Apostate from Virtue, after reading this most excellent Volume, that his Destruction is of himself.

My LORD, it is now some time since Your Lordship enter'd on the Stage of the World, and, give me leave to say again, that the Eyes of God, and all good Men will be upon You, to observe how You will act Your Part, and whether You'll follow the Instructions which the Honourable Eusebius gives in the first Part to Neander, and in the rest to Theomachus; or whether forgetting the Honour both of Your Natural and Spiritual Birth, and the Sacred Obligations of Your Baptismal Vow, You will let Your self be carried off by the great Number of Atheists, Deists, Indifferents, and Debauchees among us, whose vile Manners and Conversation, he describes in this golden Book. My LORD, in such an Age as this, You must prepare Your * Soul against the Temptations of these Men, from which, by the Grace of God, You have hitherto preserved, and I trust,

* Ecclesiasticus ii. 1.

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trust, will always preserve Your Self, though they will be sure to use all their Arts, particularly that most dangerous one of Flattery, to seduce You, and to assail Your Vertue with all their Force and Skill. But God, if You seek His Assistance, and Your own Christian Courage, and Resolution, will secure Your Lordship from them; and that You may live to be a bright, heroick, and steady Example of Christian Piety, in a most wicked and degenerate Age, shall be the constant, and most hearty Prayer, My LORD, of

Your Lordship's

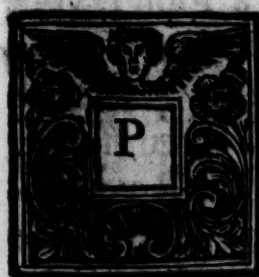
Most Obedient Servant,

GEO. HICKES.



T H E
P U B L I S H E R
T O T H E
G E N T R Y .

GENTLEMEN,



PROVIDENCE having put the following Dialogues into my Hands, I take the Boldness to offer them to the View of the Publick under your Protection. They were only intended by the Author for the private Instruction of a Young Nobleman ; on whom they have wrought such admirable Effects, that it's Pity (methinks) to bury them in Privacy,

The Publiſher to the GENTRY.

Privacy, and to confine them to one Cloſet. The Author's Deſign is charitable (I am ſure;) but whether he has been happy in Execution, I wholly leave to your Judgments. He runs through the Duty of a Gentleman, and of a Chriſtian; he points at the ſhorteſt Way to *Greatneſs* and *Goodneſs*, and furniſhes you with Materials to live with *Honour* in *this World*, and in *Glory* in the *next*.

SEEING therefore this Treatiſe comes on ſo kind an Errand, it will (I preſume) meet with a *Civil Reception*: For Meſſengers of *good News* are ſeldom unwelcome.

BUT nothing has emboldened me ſo much to caſt theſe *Pages* at your Feet, as ſincere Tenderneſs for your Perſons. It's Wiſdom to have an *Antidote* at Hand when we ſuſpect *Poiſon*; and dangerous to viſit a Peſt-houſe without a *Preſervative*. Alas, Gentlemen, you ſuck in *Poiſon*, you live in *Infection*; *Wealth*, *Grandeur*, and *Example* plot your Ruin, and Flattery diſguiſes the Danger; lewd Books are of the Cabal, they dart *Poiſon* to the Heart through the Avenues of the Eyes, and convey Death through Pleaſure.

IN St. *Peter's* Days, the Devil made his Round to prey on the unwary, but now he has almoſt eaſed himſelf of that Labour; he acts no more in Perſon, but by Deputy; he has commiſſion'd *Poets* to *Rhime* you into Deſtruction, and fees Libertines to argue you into Hell; and certainly he has had greater Succeſs againſt Mankind under the Shape of an Author, than of a Lion; your Cloſets are ſtockt with defaming *Lampoons*, lewd *Plays*, and ſcandalous *Poems*; you read theſe helliſh Papers with Pleaſure and Transport; they ſoften Nature, emasculate the Mind, and by Degrees metamorphoſe the Reader into as errant a Beaſt as the Poet; the Style charms, the Expreſſion is luſcious, and the Contrivance no leſs inviting than the Subject. All theſe petty Artifices con-

ſpire

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aspire to enflame Sense, to enliven Passion, and debauch the Will.

AGAIN, to whet Appetite, and increase Desire, Care is taken to set off Ladies, with all the Allurements of Easiness and Condescendency ; they are discarded not only of Modesty, but of Shame ; so that, if the Originals resemble the Copies, if the Sex be as ill prepared for Defence at Home, as on the Stage, the Conquest will be made without the Expence of *Artillery* and *Bombs*.

BUT this is not enough ; the Poets take upon 'em the Office of Engineers too ; they trace out the Approaches, point the Cannon, order the Attack, and then cry, *Gentlemen, Fall on*. For why do they expose not only to the Eyes in the Play-house, but in Print, past Brutalities, but to persuade you to act them over again ? And why do they enter upon Particulars, but to shew you the Method ? They ransack *Mulberry-Gardens*, *Epsom-Wells*, and other publick Scenes of Debauchery, for the Subject of your Entertainment ; their Plots and Counter-plots are only lay'd to trapan Women, and gull Heiresses ; besides, few licentious Intrigues miscarry. This is a sly *Innuendo* to the Audience and the Reader, that Success will certainly wait upon their Attempts, and by consequence 'tis a strong Provocation to enter upon Action.

AND because Nature has stamp'd on the Face of Vice, Deformity and Horrour, these ungrateful Features are shaded with charming Appellations ; the Sin lie out of Sight under a Varnish, and nothing appears but the Pleasure. For this Reason the most overt Invitations to Evil must be Christen'd, *Billets doux* ; *Lewdness* must be stiled *Gallantry*, and the *Stews* places of *Diversiſion*. Why are innocent Names put on criminal Things, but to confound Notions ; but to gild over Dishonesty, (as *Apothecaries* do Pills) that it may go down without any Checks or Convulsions of Conscience ?

SEEING

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SEEING you thus closely besieged on all Sides, and standing on the Brink of Destruction; and (what is worse) void of Fear, nay, lulled into a mortal Lethargy, without any Apprehension of your Danger, I have brought these Dialogues to your Rescue, and may assure you with some Confidence, they'll prove most useful and highly beneficial, if you'll vouchsafe to peruse them with unprejudic'd Minds, and unbiass'd Affections.

THEY lay before your Eyes the most important Parts of your Duty both to God and Men; the Snares of the World, and Wiles of the Devil; the Causes of your Miscarriage, and sure Methods either to prevent or retrieve them. And what can you desire more, but a sincere Resolution to apply these Remedies that are describ'd?

I AM sensible we live in an Age devoted to Censure and Criticism, and therefore I have thought fit to obviate an *Objection* or two. Some may think the Author treats Quality with too much Freedom, and Nobility with too little Respect: But, Gentlemen, pray remember, there is a great Difference between your *Persons* and your *Vices*; these be Honours, not those.

IT were ridiculous to Compliment Criminals, or to Reverence Felons on the Hurdle; your Failures are brought upon the Scaffold, not for Triumph, but for Execution; to receive Punishment, not Applause; what wonder then if he handles roughly those Faults he condemns? If he tears off the Vizours that conceal a loathsome Deformity under a false but tempting Superficies? He has a mind to discountenance Ill, to withdraw you from the Embraces of these treacherous Syrens, that enchant your Reason, and captivate your Affections, in order to murder your Souls; that offer you imaginary Pleasures, to reward your Credulity with real Torments. This is certainly a charitable

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ritable Design, but withal impracticable, unless each Vice be haled to the Bar, and all their *Treasons*, *Forgeries*, and *Impostures* be brought to light, and proved upon them as clear as the Day.

FOR, Gentlemen, (give me leave to speak freely,) you love Vice under the Mask of Pleasure, almost to dotage; nothing can wean your Affections from its bewitching Charms, but a Demonstration that you are most wretchedly imposed upon.

OTHERS may perchance take it ill that the Author sports sometimes upon too serious a Subject, and by consequence transgresses the Rules of Decency.

BUT you must consider we live in an Age that ranks Seriousness among the Vices, and Railery among the Virtues. Alas, Gentlemen, the *Sportive Faculty* takes place of the *Reasonable*; *Risibile* and *Rationale* have changed Places since *Aristotle's* Days; the Propriety has step'd into the Definition of Man, and banished his most essential Ingredient among the *Accidents*. Reason without Force is out of Fashion; it must appear in a *Scaramouche's* Dress to obtain an Audience, and must bring Delight as well as Instruction, to be welcome,

THE Author condescends to your Weakness; and surely you will not censure his Civility, nor burlesque his Judgment, for 'paying Deference to your Quality: Besides, he is sensible, Vice has been laught into Practice and Reputation, and Vertue into Contempt. Why therefore may not Vertue regain its Post by the same Method it lost it? And why may not the Gentry be sported into their Duty, as they have been rallied out of it? Some Poisons call for *Treacle*, others for *Fire*; but that of the *Tarantula* must be fetch'd out by *Musick*. A Peal of Laughter enarvates the Force of this *Neapolitan* Venom, and a Brace of Minutes expel it. Who knows but your
Distemper

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Distemper is of the same Nature? At least desperate Diseases are proper for Experiments; and tho' no Remedy succeed, it's a Satisfaction to have applied all.

IN fine, I fling this *Treatise* at your Feet, and if you will be pleased to peruse it with Leisure and Reflection, it may not only furnish you with Instruction, but with Pleasure; not such indeed, as courts Sense, and gratifies the bestial Part, but such as is proportioned to the supreme and leading Faculty, such as feast a *Soul*, and regales an *Intelligence*.

Your most Humble Servant,

I. Y. D.



THE



THE PREFACE.



I V E me Leave, Dear Reader, to usher in the following Conferences with a Character of the Author. He is Dead, and by Consequence out of the Reach of Vanity. And as the Regularity of his Life gives no hold to Satyr, so the Excellency of his Vertues raise him above Flattery. Many Reasons persuade me to conceal his Name; but more to publish his rare Merits.

Example has strange Attractives; the Way to Vertue by Precepts (as the Philosopher notes) is long, but by Example short and easy: Like the Laconick Dialect, it expresses much in a little, and drives Arguments more home than Logick or Rhetorick. Seeing therefore, Gentlemen have continually before their Eyes so many Statues of Vice in all Postures,

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Postures, it's time to present them with one of Vertue, that they may be convinc'd, Piety is within their Reach, as well as within their Obligation; and that they may live within the Circle of their Duty, without stepping out of the World, or debarring themselves the Freedom of Society or Conversation.

And, indeed, the Life of this Gentleman is a plain and standing Evidence, that Men transform Palaces into Places of Debauchery, not Palaces Men into Debauchees; and that Courts would be innocent, if Courtiers could resolve to remain so.

Eusebius was of a Family as ancient as the Conquest; and, what is particular, in all the Civil Wars and Revolutions of State, his Ancestors were so happy, as to stand by their Prince in spight of Faction and Interest; nor could they ever be prevailed upon to part with their Loyalty for any Prospect of Preferment. They chose rather to fall in the Defence of Justice, than to Triumph with prosperous Usurpers.

Eusebius had the good Fortune to be born of a Mother, whose Wisdom vied with her Piety, and both indeed were extraordinary. She trained him up from the Cradle in the Duties of a Christian; and, I may say, he both loved God, and feared him, so soon as he was able to frame a right Notion of his Perfection: And these first Impressions sunk so deep, that neither Age nor Employments were able to wear them off.

He was sent to the University under the Conduct of a prudent Governour, who endeavoured by Precept and Example to improve in him those Seeds of Vertue his Mother had sowed so early. He applied himself to Philosophy with Eagerness and Appetite, and made a Progress answerable to his piercing Wit and assiduous Application, yet he always lookt on Learning as the Accessory, and Piety as the Principal: That (he said) was a mere Embellishment, this an indispensable Duty: So that in Reality this was his Business, that his Diversion.

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Yet he was none of those Plodders, who seem to disband from Company, and to forswear Conversation; who place Vertue in Solvreness, and confound Piety with Spleen. No; he was free, easy, and chearful, and never refused to partake of those Sports that recreate the Mind, and ease the Body, without Prejudice to Conscience. To pawn Innocence for Pleasure, (said he) is to over-rate the one, and to undervalue the other. To laugh while we sin, is (in some sort) to renew the barbarous Cruelty of Nero, who play'd while Rome burned; or the foolish Temerity of the Indian Philosopher, who sung on the Funeral Pile.

Indeed, such an unusual Conduct was gazed at, in a Place, where Youth gives more time to the Practice of Epicurus's Morals, than to the Study of Aristotle's Philosophy; or where at least Learning is more a-la-mode than Piety; but this Admiration soon pass'd into Esteem; and he who at first was look'd on as a Monster, in Proceſs of time was stiled an Angel.

He left the University to visit the Camp, and made several Campaigns under N. N. Neither Interest nor Ambition called him into the Field; the only Aim of his Resolution was to learn the Mysteries of War, that he might be one Day in a Capacity to serve his Prince with Honour, and his Country with Success.

Piety seldom follows an Army. Soldiers seem to leave Conscience in their Winter-Quarters, as well as Religion, that they may sin without Check, and be damned without Apprehension. Eusebius disapproved this ill Husbandry. Our Care (said he) must rise with the Danger; and seeing we are not assured of an Hour, it's Madness to neglect our Soul one Moment. I suppose, (continued he to a Friend) when we put on a Red Coat, we put not off Christianity, nor receive a Commission from God to live at Pleasure, when we enter into the Service of our

[a]

Prince:

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Prince : No, no ; let us die like Men, but live like Christians; this is the only way to leave an honourable Memory in this World, and to find a glorious Reception in the next.

His Life in the Camp was answerable to his Principles, he prayed half an Hour on his Knees Morning and Evening, and never omitted to be present at Publick Prayers, when he was not on Duty ; he would never suffer either prophane or obscene Discourse. For (said he) it's hard to hear without Sin those Things that cannot be spoke without Offence ; to permit Crimes is to abett them. When he could not excuse an Officer's Fault, he always lessen'd it, and spoke ill of no Body but himself. He compared Detractors to your Italian Bravoes, who attack People behind, and stab Bodies at unawares, whilst those kill a Man's Reputation.

One Day an Officer told him, War called for Courage, not Vertue ; that Resolution carried the Day, not Conscience.

That is (replied he) Ambition challenges the Time of War, Diversion the Time of Peace, and Sin every Moment of your Life ; but then who will claim the Moment of your Death ? God. Alas, Sir, you'll neither have the Time nor the Thought to dispose of it so advantageously ; as you live in Sin, so in all Probability you'll die in it. You are mistaken, Sir ; Sin enervates the Mind, not Piety ; and could we read the Thoughts of our Soldiers, we should find too little Conscience drove more of them out of the Field at the Battle of N. than too much. A Man must be either an Atheist, or Mad, to front Danger in Sin.

*Eusebius proved beyond Demonstration, that Vertue is no Enemy to Valour ; he breathed nothing but Sieges, Battles, and Expeditions ; he went to Combats with as composed a Countenance, as others march to Triumphs ; and, like Hannibal, was the first in the Field, and the last out of it ; he generally ask'd the most dangerous Post,
and*

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and sought Perils, as if he had a mind to fall, yet he always came off with Safety and Applause; Providence seemed to have made him Proof against Ball and Sword, and his Vertue armed him against Fear.

Being challenged once to a Duel, he answered coldly, Sir, though I fear not your Sword, I tremble at my Maker's Anger; I dare venture my Life in a good Cause, but cannot hazard my Soul in a bad one. I'll charge up to the Cannon's Mouth, but want Courage to storm Hell. And when a Friend told him he must either Fight, or forfeit his Honour. You are mistaken, (replied Eusebius) I'll gain Honour by my Disgrace, and shew the World I am no Coward, by daring Censure and Obloquy. He is couragious and brave, who stands up for Conscience against the false but prevailing Maxims of Custom and Opinion, not he, who betrays his Duty, and dreads more an imaginary Imputation, than a real Crime. Eusebius returned from the Army with Glory, and brought off his Piety in Triumph. He was received by his Master with open Arms, and advanced to an honourable Post. He labour'd for his Benefactor's Interest, not his own; and used to say, The Prince should always carry off the Profit, and the Subject the Glory of doing well.

He could not endure to purchase Attendants with fair Promises, and then to reward their Expectation with Disappointment. His Intentions were as sincere as his Words, and he never promised a Favour, but he designed it. He could not endure to tantalize Pretendants with gay Hopes, and in the End dismiss them with an airy Complement. This is (said he) to spend their Time, and drain their Purse, with insignificant Waiting, to tempt their Patience, and in the End to draw them to be your Enemies.

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Eusebius found at last, that Innocence is not above the reach of Envy, and that in Courts Vertue is often punished, and Vice rewarded. A Club of Courtiers caballed against him, and persuaded the Prince to discard him. He bore this Disgrace with an Evenness of Temper, that surprized his Enemies, and, like the Sun in an Eclipse, all gazed on him with Admiration. Though he was overpowered, he could not be overcome. He looked brighter under a Cloud, than in the full Meridian of his Grandeur, and all concluded he was no less in Misfortune, than he had been in the highest Splendour of Glory.

A Friend tempted him to strike in with a Faction against his Prince; but he received the Proposition with Indignation and Horror. No, (said he) I had rather be wretched without a Fault, than great with a Crime: Duty call'd me to my Master's Service, not Interest; and I'll rather pawn my Life, than forfeit my Loyalty; my high Pretensions lie in the other World, not in this; my Prince raised me to a considerable Fortune, now he thinks fit to discharge me, I'll thank him for the Favour, and not repine at his Justice. I accepted the Station at his Command with Gratitude, and I quit it with Resignation.

He was received again into Favour; yet this unexpected Turn wrought no Alteration in his Humour; he rose with the same Unconcernedness he fell; he was above the Charms of Prosperity, and Proof against the Stroke of Adversity; neither good Fortune puffed him up, nor bad depress'd him; he never thought of Revenging those Affronts he had received from his Rivals, but used his Power with Moderation, and returned Civility for Unkindness.

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He retired at the Revolution from Business, and gave himself wholly to the Practice of Vertue; he was advanc'd in Years, and resolv'd to devote the Remainder of his Days to Eternity. I may die soon (said he) but cannot live long; it's Prudence therefore to manage every Moment as the last, because it may be so. He discharged his Debts immediately, saying, This was too pressing and too important a Business, to be trusted to an Hour's Integrity, that many suffer in the next World for a Successor's Neglect in this.

One that lived so well, could not die ill; for every Man's Death is a Copy of his Life, and exactly resembles the Original. In his last Sickness he shewed all the Bravery of a Soldier, and all the Piety of a Christian; he bore the Dolours of his Distemper, not only with Patience, but Transport, and look'd Death in the Face with the same Undauntedness he often beheld the Enemy in Battel. Sir, (said he to his Nephew standing) remember you are born to the same Fate, you may read your Destiny in mine; you will once be in the same Circumstances you see me; you know not when you must take the last Farewel of Life; Death steals upon us like a Thief, and strikes without Noise, without Warning: Seeing therefore you are never secure, be always prepared, leave nothing to Chance or Hazard; a Surprize is possible, and (what is worse) irreparable. Never pretend to shew your Wit by disputing Principles, nor think you own your Reason most, when you least own your Faith. This is to place Wit in Folly, and Reason in Impiety. Practice Vertue, this is your only Business, it will make you content in this World, and open a fair Prospect of Felicity to the next.

His

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His Words seem'd tipt with Fire, they pierced the Hearts of all that were present, and warmed their Affections; whilst all mourned, he alone was joyful, In fine, recommending his Soul to the Mercy of his Redeemer, he gently expired, leaving behind a Pattern for Gentlemen's Imitation. Thus died Eusebius, a Scholar, Soldier, and Courtier, and in all these States a Saint.

Let Gentlemen learn by this Example, they may be Great and Good; and that they may discharge themselves with Glory of all the Offices of Society, without betraying the Duty of a Christian.



THE



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THE



THE
Gentleman Instructed, &c.

DIALOGUE I.

NEANDER a Young Gentleman, desires EUSEBIUS to
instruct him in the Duty of a Gentleman.

Eusebius.



WELCOME, dear Neander : What
 fair Wind has blown me the Fa-
 vour of so early a Visit ? This is
 extraordinary.

Neander. Pray, Why so ? my
 Business has been up and abroad,
 these two Hours ; is it not high time to follow it ?

Euseb. Ah ! But our Town Sparks have something of the
Owl, they rise at Night, and lie down in the Morning.
 They observe a most exact Symmetry in Disorder, and
 like *Lobsters* go backwards ; in a word, they turn Na-
 ture Topsy-turvy, or read it backwards ; it's Genteel
 and Modish to out-sleep the Sun, and an Argument of
 Peasantry to do like other Men.

Neander. I have left the College too lately to be acquaint-
 ed with the Customs of the Town : I have not open'd
 the *Ceremonial*, nor perus'd the *Ritual a-la-mode* : Yet, me-
 thinks, to turn Night into Day is an odd Metamorpho-
 sis : Nature (sure) never intended Eyes for Darknefs :
 Gloeworms indeed are obliged to Night, it sets 'em off,
 and makes their faint Lustre sparkle with more *Eclat*.
 But why Men should dote on Shades, and range in Ob-
 scurity, I can't divine, unless they long to duel with
 Posts, and try a Rubber at Loggerheads ; in short, it's a
 battish Humour, and jars with my Constitution.

B

Euseb.

Euseb. For all that, you must take up with Night; and be reconcil'd to Darkness, if you intend to stand fair with our own Town Sparks; they are of the Family of *Megara*, true Sons of Night and *Erebus*. Light strikes too hard on their Eyes, it dazles them like *Opium*; It even works on the Brain and stupifies; but then, towards the Evening they return to themselves, and adjourn to the Tavern, and from thence sally out upon the Watch, and manfully storm Glass-windows. In fine, their Business and Reason sleep in the Day, and rise when wise Men go to Bed.

Now I suppose you intend to enter into the Confraternity, you'll not want most kind Invitations: These Blades lie on the Catch; and place Centinels on *Oxford Road* to give Notice when a Prize draws near; that is, when a Gentleman leaves the College; and then they fly to the Innocent Youth like Eagles to the Quarry; they proffer their Service, admire his Parts, Compliment him into Snares, Wheedle him into Debauchery, empty his Pockets, wound his Soul, and stab his Reputation; and when they have martyr'd his Innocence, and embezzled his Estate, kick him out of their Company, and so *exit* the young Squire.

Nean. A Man (I see) must carry his Wits about him at *London*; he must stand on his Guard to prevent a Surprise, and suspect Friends, not to be over-reach'd by Enemies. Like the Lion he must sleep with his Eyes open: Well; a Danger foreseen is half avoided. *Eusebius*, I have been disorder'd since my Arrival, and thought last Night more Hours, than I slept Minutes.

Euseb. What! are you smitten so soon? Some Female Beauty has (I suppose) storm'd your Heart, and good Nature has beat the *Chamade*. The Articles are (no doubt) drawn up and signed; unless perchance you resolve to surrender at Discretion. But in good earnest, has Liberty given you a Surfeit? Has Freedom gall'd you? Will you try how neatly you can dance in Fetters, and caper in Trammels? This is a Sample of University Breeding; your Collegians are a pack of awkward Animals, full of Wit, but without Judgment to manage it; one would think they studied not to grow Wise, but Fools; to lose their Reason, or to forget the Use of it. They no sooner enter into the World, but like Children, they chace every Butterfly, and run on the Spur to their Ruin. Ah; dear *Neander*! take Care; a precipitate Choice makes way for

for a long Repentance; stifle the first Sparks of Love, time will quickly fan 'em into a Flame; a green Wound is easily healed, but a festered one ends in a Gangreen.

Nean. Under Favour, you run riot on a false Conjecture. I am not Heart-Sick, but Town-Sick.

Euseb. Town-Sick! This is, without Peradventure, an Outlandish Distemper; there is not one *Recipe* for it in our *London Dispensatory*: However, the Disease is not dangerous, for, I find no mention of it in our Weekly Bills of Mortality; in what Mould, for God's Sake, were you cast? Surely you are of some more refined, more celestial Temper, than other Gentlemen, without Sense, without Passion; in fine, all Angel; all Seraphin.

Nean. Not so neither.

Euseb. What then?

Nean. Why Sir? I am a Man, subject to all the Infirmities of Human Nature; but I would not willingly surrender my Reason, nor quit the Privilege of Nature; I would not throw up my Claim to Heaven for any earthly Pretension: In fine, I have no Inclination to go to Grass with *Nebuchadonozor*; nor to lie in the same Bed with Brutes. I am a Man by Nature, and a Christian by Grace, and would neither debar my Reason, nor throw a Scandal upon my Profession: In a word, I'll save my Soul.

Euseb. Neander, Let me embrace thee; I was just lighting a Candle (as *Diogenes* did at *Athens*) to find a Man in *London*. I thought Piety had taken leave of our Nation, and that Christianity had flown over to the Continent; but, God be thank'd, we have left among us one Man, and one Christian; so that the whole Species is not extinct. We live in a mad World, without Method, without Order; we seem to play at *Cross Questions*: Virtue and Vice have changed Places, and almost Names, and even Wit is confounded with Folly; Reason consists no more in the Use, but in the Abuse of it. Gentlemen debauch themselves into Credit, and draw Fame from Impiety; the whole Business of Christians lies in confuting their Belief by their Practice: These monstrous Irregularities have (more than once) moved me to suspect, that the most Wise and Thinking-part of Mankind is coop'd up in *Bedlam*, whilst Mad-men and Fools range about the Town in Coaches.

This Man whines away at a *Strumpet's* Feet, his Estate, his Health, and his Soul too; another drowns his Reason in *Claret* and *Canary*; he plays the Brute all the Week, and rises a Man on *Sunday Morning*: A third delivers himself up to his Palate, and condemns his Wit to drudge for his Gluttony; he judges of Meats by the Price, not by the Taste; and those only regale his Appetite that drain his Purse; his study is to provoke Hunger, not to lay it, and seldom rises from the Table, 'till a Surfeit forces him to call for a *Bason*.

A Fourth has perchance received *the Lie*, and in a Huff bauls out for Satisfaction, *i. e.* a Stab; the Stage is prepared, and up the *Hectors* jump with drawn Swords, (like the *Roman* Slaves) to give Diversion to the Spectators: If this be not Folly and Madness without Mask or Disguise, pray give me their Definition; it's hard to determine whether this Conduct be a fitter Object for *Heraclitus's* Tears, or *Democritus's* Laughter; it's a Compound of Farce and Tragedy, but a Vein of Folly runs throughout the whole Mass.

Religion keeps Pace with our Reason, and is just regarded as much. Methinks our Worship smells something of Paganism, for we adore God (as the Heathens did *Hercules*) with Showers of Stones and Brickbats, (*viz.*) of Oaths and Blasphemies; this is the only Homage we think fit to pay our Maker; and indeed it is a kind of Recognizance; and is so far commendable, as it puts us in Mind there is such a Thing to believe in, and to pray to, as well as to swear by. Now why we should be so sparing of our Prayers is a hard Question.

Some may perchance imagine the Posture of a Suppliant is below an *English* Courage; besides, it's an uneasy Figure, and argues much Want or great Covetousness, two heavy Imputations for a Gentleman; moreover, kneeling is a Mark of Subjection and Baseness; for I was once told, that a Yeoman on his Legs was taller and greater than a Prince on his Knees: This is a rough Draught of our Town Wit and Religion, without one dash of Satyr or Hyperbole: They are both at a low Ebb, and God knows when the Tide will turn. Neander,

stand on your Guard, and look to your Conscience, as well as to your Purse; for I assure you, the one is in less Danger than the other; unless you carry a watchful Eye

over

over your Thoughts and Actions, you will fall into Snares that are laid to entrap Innocence.

Nean. However, surely God has not tied up our Duty to Impossibilities; he tells us, his Yoke is easy, and his Burthen light; and then assures us by the Mouth of his Apostle, that our Power is always equal at least to the Temptation; we may therefore discharge our selves of all the Offices of Life and Conversation, without overlooking the Duty of a Christian; for certainly God never framed our Tongue for Silence, nor our Reason for Solitude; we may handle 'em both *right*, as well as *wrong*, and employ 'em to a good Use, no less than to an ill One. I hope there is no Necessity of sailing into *Egypt*, and of taking up in the Wilderness of *Thebais*, nor of running into a *Convent*, or of receiving Holy Orders at *Rome*; for though these Good Fathers may walk pretty securely to Heaven, yet I understand they make the Voyage alone: Now I feel no Charms in *Celibacy*; and besides, they are by Law disseized not only of their Birth-right, but even of the Benefit of the Clergy; so that they can claim no Liberty but that of the Prison, no Property but the Gallows. I have no Inclination to fling up my Estate, and as little to lay it at the Mercy of greedy Favourites; nor to fly to Heaven by the Way of *Tyburn*: I would not withdraw from Society, nor forswear Company, nor (like old *Timon*) disband from my own Species,

Ensch. You have Reason; God condemns us, not, as *Pharaoh*, to the Drudgery of making Bricks without furnishing us with Materials; he proportions his Grace to our Wants, and never commands us to Fight on unequal Terms; the Advantage lies on our side, and if we give our Adversary the higher Ground, our Defeat must lie at our own Door; we may be over-come, but can't be over-powered; our Cowardice gives Temptation the Day, not our Weakness.

Besides, Virtue is not confin'd to Place or Condition; it may be practis'd in Towns as well as in Desarts; and no less by Courtiers than Peasants: Nay, it shines (methinks) in a Palace, like the Sun in the Meridian, with Pomp and Majesty; for what can even Fancy paint more Charming and more Glorious than Grandees, neither abject in Adversity, nor insolent in Prosperity; than Courtiers peaceable in the Noise of Affairs, temperate in

the midst of Excess, unchangeable in Vicissitudes, and constant in all the Turns of Fortune; untainted with Lusts, composed in Tumults, and smiling at all those Things, that are either expected or feared by others; than Men who have the Power to do what they will, and the Will to do nothing but what is just and reasonable? This is no Platonick but a Christian Virtue; it is not only found in Fiction and Romance, but has been commended to Practice; it has appeared more than once on our *Horizon*, supported by Dignity, and waited on by all the Magnificence of Power and Royalty: You may therefore hold your Estate without flinging up your Title to Heaven.

Nean. Indeed had Providence cut off my Claim to Heaven, when it intrusted me with a *Lordship*, I should have been no Gainer by the Blessing; notwithstanding, though Virtue be in my Power, if Vice be in my Will, I shall, without Question, be miserable: Let me therefore desire you to favour me with some Rules, by which I may shape my Course; you have stemm'd the Tides of Youth, and beat back Temptation with Courage and Success; those Waves that have pass'd by you, rush on me; so that the Danger is certain, my Escape doubtful. I fling my self into your Arms. I have at least learnt the first Lesson of Prudence, *viz.* to submit to the Advice of those whom Age and Experience have sufficiently instructed.

Enseb. My Age is on its Declension, yet I am not (God be thank'd) ashamed to live, or afraid to die; I neither contemn Life, nor overvalue it; and therefore expect my *quietus est* with Patience, and will welcome my Discharge. I have withdrawn from the Hurry and Tumult of worldly Affairs, and now lead a retired, but not an ignoble Life: I gave my last Farewel to the Court, not by Force, but Choice; and indeed, it deserves no Thought but of Contempt. I have tasted of bad Fortune, and of Good; but never placed my Happiness in the one, or my Misery in the other; nor have I entred into the World like a Mute, merely to fill the Stage: No, I once made no contemptible Figure by my Prince's Benevolence, and tho' in the Confusion of the Government, I fell from my Post, I carried off my Honesty in Triumph, and expos'd my Estate to secure my Loyalty; yet, God be prais'd, I am not brought to the Basket; though

had rather live on Charity than Rapine, and wou'd sooner earn my Bread by the Sweat of my Brow, than of my Conscience. In my Retirement, I have had Occasion to study Things, and to reflect on Men, and have made Observations on both, so that I am not quite unprovided of those Qualities the Office you impose upon me requires: I'll therefore take the Liberty to counsel you as a Friend, not as a Master; let us retire into my Closet.

DIALOGUE II.

Eusebius instructs Neander in the Duty of a Christian.

Euseb. YOU must act two Parts; of a Gentleman, and of a Christian: We'll discourse of the latter at our next Meeting, and at present only touch the former. Some Gentlemen keep up to their Character without the advantageous Helps of Precepts, or Education; you may read their Birth on their Faces; their Gate and Mein tell their Quality; they both Charm and Awe, and at the same time flash Love and Reverence; their Extraction glitters under all Disguises; it sparkles in Sackcloth, and breaks through all the Clouds of Poverty and Misfortune; there is a *je ne sçay quoy* in their whole Demeanour, that tears off the Vizor, and discovers Nobility, though it sculks *incognito*; they are reserved without Pride, and familiar without Meanness; they time their Behaviour to Circumstances, and know when to stand on Tip-toe, and when to stoop: In fine, their most trivial Actions are Great, and their Discourse is Noble.

Others seem to be born Gentlemen to shame Quality; one would swear Nature intended to frame 'em for the Dray, and Chance flung 'em into the World with an *Escutcheon*: They are all of a Piece, Clown without, and Coxcomb within; and so like *Foplingtons* are graced with Titles to play the *Ape* by Patent: These of the first *Classe* need no Precepts, and those of the second deserve none; however, Counsel may be useful to others; for Behaviour is acquired like other Arts, by Study and Application.

I.

To begin the Part of a Gentleman, persuade yourself, it's your Duty and Interest to act it well; for whosoever looks upon it as a Matter of small Concern, will come off with Dis-esteem; he will follow the Bent of Nature, and swim down the Stream of Inclination, rather than strive against it; for who will balk Humour, or fence against ill Customs for nothing? This I take to be the Reason, why so many in Conversation fall below their Station; they fancy a Title supported with Means, places 'em in a Region above the Niceties of Breeding; that a *Sir* gilds the most unbeseeming Behaviour, and a *Coronet* dignifies Rusticity; but this is a Mistake; for as Gentlemen stand above the Crowd, so they lie more open to View and Censure: For Actions are not rated by Men, but Men by Actions; and if these smell of the Clown, or suit with the Peasant, *Right Worshipful* must be content with those Titles; for the *Mob* knows well enough, that Gentlemen can claim no Respect from Nature: They are all of the same Matter, and the Soul of a *Lazarus* is of as refined a Metal as that of *Dives*; and therefore, if they see no Advantage on Quality's Side, but a Coach and Six; they will be apt to think themselves as good Men as their Masters, though not so Rich; and that they are beholden more to Chance or Injustice for their Fortune, than to Merit.

II.

Let not your Family be the Subject of your Discourse, nor sling the Registers of your Genealogy on the Table before all Company; this Topick is both Fulsom and Ungenteel; it's a shrewd Argument you are big of Conceit, and more obliged to your Ancestors for your Blood, than for your Wit; though your Great Grandfather rode Admiral at Sea with 2000*l. per Annum*, if he has left Posterity no other Mark of his Greatness, but his Vices, I shall rank him among the most wretched Creatures that ever breathed; seeing the Height of his Station only rais'd him above the Vulgar to proclaim his Shame, and render his Infamy more perspicuous; it's a Madness to take the Measure of our Deserts by the Parts of our Forefathers, their personal Worth adds not one Hair's breadth

breadth to our Stature: We may enter upon their Estates, and perchance upon their Titles, but not upon their Virtues; these are neither entailed on the Family, nor alienable by any Deed of Conveyance.

Besides, whoever rakes in the Ashes of the Dead, may fall upon the Stench instead of Perfumes; for after Enquiry, who knows but you may find the Source of your Nobility tainted with Treason, and that the very Title you bear is the Price of Disloyalty? Now though, according to the Proverb, *Those Children are happy whose Parents are in Hell*; yet certainly, a Son should not boast of the Purchase, nor look big because his Father is miserable: Let your Ancestors therefore sleep in their Graves, and be not so foolish as to disturb 'em by your Vanity; adopt their Virtues by Imitation and Practice, but have a care of their Vices. I honour Nobility set off with Merit, but when he has no other Prop than Money and Patent, I always compare it to those proud Temples of *Egypt*, that under guilt Frontispieces, and azure'd Vaults, lodged nothing but Statutes of *Rats* and *Crocodiles*. I value more an innocent Ploughman, than a vicious Prince: And prefer his Nobility who has built a great Fortune upon Worth and Virtue, before his, who by Succession receives one.

III.

As it's ungentleel to boast of our Family, so it's no less Mean and Childish to spend Rhetorick on our Performances. If your Prince and Country honour you with a high Employment, either in the Camp or the Bench, discharge your self of the Trust with Reputation: deserve Panegyrick, but play not the Orator your self; though you are as Eloquent as *Tully*, you'll only labour to spoil a good Subject, and whilst you vainly set off your own Feats, you'll meet with nothing but Shame and Infamy. *N. N.* was an excellent Soldier, he feared nothing but Fear; he chose always the *Van*, and was often the first Man on the Breach; all admir'd his Courage and prais'd it; and even those who disapproved his Conduct, did Justice to his Valour; but this Gentleman lost at Table the Glory he had won in the Field, and talking away in his Winter Quarters the Honour he had purchased the whole Campaign. I did this, said he, at the Siege of *R*, and this at the Battle of *; had I not seised

seised on such a Post at **, the Army had been in Danger. One would have thought all the Generals and Soldiers had been in Garrison, and that N. N. with his small Brigade alone, defeated the Designs of the *French*. This overgrown Vanity cost him dear; for instead of gaining the Reputation of a General, he went off with that of a Fop, and all concluded he was too ambitious of Praise to deserve any. Your deep Rivers move with a silent Majesty, shallow Brooks alone make a Noise and Tumult among Pebbles. The great Marshal *de Turenne* never spoke of himself, but when forc'd, and even then, with Modesty; and though the King was wholly indebted to the wise Conduct of this Gallant Man for many Victories, yet he never said so: No, he wou'd lay Miscarriages at his own Door, and Success at that of his Officers and Soldiers; this made him appear great even in his Overthrow, and generally his Moderation was more glorious to him than Victory. Imitate the Silence of this *Hero*, not the noisy Impertinence of Fools; carry off the Satisfaction of great Actions, and let others go with the Honour of praising 'em, and let People rather learn your Atchievements at the Stationers, than at your Table.

IV.

Avoid the modish Rant of Oaths, and Imprecations: It's an ungenteel Dialect, as well as unchristian, and clashes both with the Rules of Breeding, and of the Gospel. Custom indeed has made 'em fashionable, but neither civil nor lawful; for Vice can never plead Prescription. I know it lies under the Protection of Number and Quality; but ill Things have no right to Sanctuary: Because Vermin swarm, must they be permitted to encrease? Shall the Number of Felons plead for Pardon? No, no, the Customariness of ill things makes 'em worse; and the more they must be discountenanced, and taught Discipline. In a Word, whatever jars with Religion, and cuts upon good Breeding, is below a Gentleman: And therefore in spite of Example and Practice, I must caution you against some Parts of *English* Civility; for though they go for *Consent* in the *English* Dominions, they'll not bear the Tests of other Nations.

For Example, *Damn ye*, says one, *I am glad to see you*: Is not this a quaint Salutation? First to pack me away

Hell, and then protest he is glad to see me so conveniently lodg'd? What Provision will these Blades make for their Enemies, if they place their Friends so untowardly? Certainly, they fancy Hell is a fine Seat, and that the Damned are in a fair way of Promotion?

Damn ye Dog, how dost doe? Cries another: This feat Compliment implies Damnation and Transformation too; it's a Compound of Curse and Raillery. I am plunged into Hell, dash'd out of the List of Rationals, and then with a Taunt ask'd how I do. Why? A Man in Fire and Brimstone is not altogether at his Ease, and a reasonable Creature curst into a Dog, not very fond of the Metamorphosis.

A third very genteelly accosts a Friend he has not perchance seen of a Twelve-month. *Ye Son of a Whore, where have you been?* This is an *English* Address to a Tittle: It is a kind of a Staple Commodity of the Nation, and like our Wooll must not be transported under Pain of Confiscation: But surely we need not lay so severe an Embargo on the Ware, for it's ten to one 'twill never find Vent in any other Nation on this Side of the *Canaries*; a handful of Dirt well applied is as civil a Compliment, though not quite so cleanly. *Son of a Whore!* There is abundance of Freedom in the Expression, but not a Grain of Breeding: Unless you measure Behaviour by the Dialect of a *Billingsgate* and the *Bear-Garden*. Certainly these Gentlemen are Admirers of Charity; why else do they dignify Whoredom? For *Whore* stands for a Mark of Quality, a distinguishing Character; otherwise the Salutation would appear coarse and homely; but by their leave, few are in love with *Cross-Bars*; and to be Brother to a By-blow, is to be a Bastard once removed.

I know we fling a Veil on these Expressions, and wash over their Foulness with fair Pretences. *Damn ye* (says one) and *Son of a Whore* stand merely for *Cyphers*, or only serve to enliven a Period, and to make the Expression more blustering; I confess *Whore* and *Damnation* are near a-kin, and often go together; but for all that, the Silliness of the Excuse can't stifle the monstrous Incivility of the Compliment; for though it signifies nothing to him who receives it in good time, it will signify much to him that spoke it: For though a Friend may let such Curses fall to the Ground, God will put 'em to Account;

count; and though they stand for *Cyphers* in *England*, they may purchase eternal Torments in Hell.

They are, says another, Marks of *English* Familiarity, pure Sallies of Kindness and Demonstrations of Friendship. No doubt, to deliver over to Satan an old Acquaintance, without asking his Consent to the Conveyance, is Freedom with a Vengeance; but at which end of the Compliment is his Kindness? In short, *Neander*, such Expressions grate the Organ, and turn the very Faculty of Hearing into a Burthen; they are high Symptoms of a lewd Inclination, and of a depraved Complexion; for when the Breath smells rank, the Stomach is infected. In short, such a *Fargon* is a Breach of Civility, it's a Rustick *Cant*, an uncreditable Dialect; nor is the whole *Posse* of Bullies able to ennoble it.

V.

When Civility obliges you to visit Ladies, pray keep your Compliments to the Rules of Christianity; there is no Necessity of laying Religion at the Door with your *Goloshoes*, nor of denying God when you entertain her Ladyship: For certainly Breeding is not incompatible with Religion, and a Man may make an Address *alamode* without apostatising from Christianity: Yet though the Worship of the Virgin *Mary* be disallowed of, we may adore Ladies without the Breach of a Statute, and commit Idolatry not only without Reproof, but even without Sin: One swears, *Heaven sits in her Smiles, and Hell in her Frowns*. A second stiles her *Saint*; tho' perchance her Ladyship is more stockt with Beauty than Piety, and her Face better provided with Grace, than her Soul. A third enlarges her Perfections; he ranks her among the Angels; and to compleat the Folly with Blasphemy, the fourth *Deifies* her. These Pagan Compliments are the Standard of Courtship, the Scale of Ceremony, and the Measure of good Breeding. But after all, Practice can never blanch over the Foulness of these daring Expressions; every Syllable breaths Frenzy and Blasphemy; nor is there any way to acquit these raving Platonicks of a Crime, but by supposing 'em unreasonable. A few Pimples handsomely sprinkled would very efficaciously dislodge the *Angel*, as perchance her Lewdness has banish'd the *Saint*; and a few Small Pox would

chequer

chequer her Divinity, and tumble the Goddess into a Monster ; and then Hell might as well perch on her Smiles, as on her Frowns. But Raillery a-part, tho' we fling Impiety out of the Question, such Addresses are plain Satyr, and invective on the Sex : For they suppose Women either extravagantly Proud, or superlatively Silly ; now the very Supposition is both ungentle and scandalous. I am sensible indeed the Sex is no Enemy to Hyperbole in Courtship ; Women are more fond of those Glasses that conceal Disproportions, than of those that represent 'em ; they can't well distinguish between Flattery and Merit, and as they eagerly desire those Perfections that are proper to their Sex, so they easily are persuaded they possess them ; for we soon believe, what we earnestly desire : So hence it is, that they take a pleasing Raillery for a serious Truth, and even sometimes a *Lampoon* for a *Panegyrick* ; but then an ungrateful Truth puts 'em into a Ferment ; it ruffles their good Humour, and sours their Blood. Something therefore may be allowed to Custom and their Constitution ; flatter their *Ladyships* into an even Temper, rather than reason 'em out of it, provided you keep within a mean, and step not beyond the Bounds of Decency ; but to break into Flights of Impiety, into Raptures of Blasphemy, is to play the Fool and the Atheist.

VI.

Gentlemen have so much time on their Hands, that they know not how to spend it ; it's a Burthen and a Charge, and so, like Prodigals, they rather fling it away, than take Pains to improve it. I counsel you therefore to set aside some Hours for Reading ; it's a handsome Diversion, and conveys Profit through Pleasure ; the Intellect is a grateful Soil ; but then like a Field requires manuring. By Reading you join past Ages to the present, you Travel into *Asia*, *Africa* and *America* without Expence, without Danger, nay, without walking out of your Closet. Sensual Pleasures rather stupify than delight, they play upon the Organ, and dull the Appetite, they are often brutal, and seldom innocent ; but those of the understanding shine brighter, they are of a more refined Metal, free from Dross, and void of Repentance ; they extend the Faculty, and render it more rational ; they rather

rather whet Desire than glut it, and screw Man's topping Prerogative, *Reason*, up to the highest Pitch. A Gentleman furnish'd with Reading, can never be at a Loss to set on foot, and carry on a handsome Conversation; he is always well stock'd, and carries his Provisions about him; whereas others are forced to fetch Matter from the Kennel or the Stable, and too too often from the Stews; their Discourse is a Compound of Smut and Rallery, enlivened always with Fooleries, and sometimes seasoned with Oaths and Blasphemies: Nonsense, in fine, though not the most creditable, is the most innocent and less blamed Ingredient. Good God! how often have I lost Patience, and fretted away good Humour in the Company of Gentlemen of fair Estates, and of noble Extraction; methought they had serv'd an Apprenticeship under Grooms or Dog-boys; they eternally grated my Ears with Hounds and Horses, and broke out into such clamorous Tumults, as if they had been drawing up the Grievances of the Nation, or pelting the Prerogative; yet after all, the Question was only, whether *Puss* or *Light-foot* got the better last Chace. Racing and Hunting are indeed laudable Recreations, and upon Occasions may be discoursed of; but then, to harp perpetually upon these Creatures, is an infallible Argument their Thoughts are mean, and too weak wing'd to soar above the Beast. Some Years ago I took a Turn beyond the Seas, and made a considerable Stay in those Parts: At my return, I gave a Visit to an old Acquaintance; a Man of Character, of Estate, of an ancient Family, and *Deputy-Lieutenant* of a County; he was at Table; a Hawking-Bag hung on the left side, and a Bumpkin guarded the right; his Hat, Coat, and Wigg, were all of a piece. more fit for a *Scare-Crow* than a *Deputy*; his Memory was as short as his Wigg; for some Years Absence had wiped out our Acquaintance; he knew me not, and indeed I was no less puzzled to find my Friend under so slovenly a Disguise: However, at length we renewed our old Species, and then he very warmly embrac'd me with this Salutation; *Eusebius, by God, I am glad to see thee*: I expected he would follow this quaint Compliment with an enquiry into my Health, or satisfied his Curiosity with a Rehearsal of my Travels; that he would ask in what Posture I left our Allies; whether they made Pre-

parations

parations for the Siege of *Namur*, or *Monsieur* for that of *Mastricht*; whether *Prince Eugene* enter'd *Cremona* with greater Glory, or left it with greater Infamy; whether *Fribergen* did better to receive a Stab from *Maboni*, than Quarter; or whether this brave *Baron* died like a Fool or a Hero. In fine, what Advantage the Imperialists got by the Victory at *Luzzara*, or whether the Profit would balance the Expence of Powder and Shot, laid out in the *Empire* on the Thanksgiving-Day.

No, the Gentleman's Curiosity never travelled so far; he had confined his Knowledge within the Bounds of his own Country; all the rest of the World was *Terrâ incognita* to his *Worship*: He fell immediately upon the Excellency of *Tobacco*; and then halled me up to the Stable, that I might pay my Respect to *Bobtail*; and in the way honoured me with an accurate Account of his Poultry. Oh! said I to my self, had this *Lieutenant* hunted less, and read more; had he cultivated his Understanding, and let a Field or two lie *Fallow*, he might have been Company for Men: But, alas, he was the Darling of the Family; he hector'd it at Home, whilst he should have been at School and Abroad; was made a Man at Fifteen, to be a Child and a Coxcomb at Threescore.

I would not have you upon all Occasions discourse in Syllogism, nor deliver your Thoughts in Mood and Figure: such Philosophical Cant suits better with a Pedant, than a Gentleman; and may pass in the School, but not in the Parlour. Neither press upon Company a *Vacuum*, nor Mr. *Boyle's Pondus Atmosphærae*, a civil Conversation may be managed handsomely in either *Hypothesis*; and I conceive Discourse prospered no less in the Days of good old *Materia Prima*, than in the Reign of *des Cartes's Third Element*.

You may also let the Grand *Mogul* sit quietly at *Agra*, and *Prester John* in *Ethiopia*; few Gentlemen's Knowledge Travels so far from Home. *France*, *Spain*, and *Italy* lie more conveniently; besides *Claret*, *Malaga*, and *Flasks of Florencc*, have given us some Notions of those Kingdoms.

Time your Subject; good Things spoke out of Season, lose their Value. I would not harangue a Lady in *Greek*, nor a Country Vicar in *Hebrew*: For, alas, her Learning goes not beyond *French*, nor his above *Latin*: Discourse must

must be adapted to the Company ; and it takes more when it naturally slides in, than when drawn in by Head and Shoulders. In a Word, *Neander*, enrich your Understanding by the Knowledge of Things that become your Quality ; and when you are doubly equipp'd (I mean with a fair Estate, and a good Fund of Learning) what can you desire more, but an ordinary Stock of Prudence to lay them out at Advantage ?

VII.

Converse not ordinarily with Persons above your Rank, nor with those that are below it ; that will endanger your Estate, this your Breeding. A Man of a 1000 Pound *per Annum*, can't long keep Pace with one of ten Thousand ; he'll infallibly lag, and jade by the way ; and perchance be forc'd to take in at the next Goal : Or, if in time he resolve to forestal his Ruin, he must fast out the Riot of a short *Carnaval* with a long Lent ; he must stint himself to a short Pittance, and lop off a Branch to secure the Stock : For Estate-wounds fester into a Gangrene, and nothing but the Saw or Seering-Iron can stop the Infection.

But on the other side, to herd with Peasants is a kind of voluntary Degradation ; it's to break your *Escutcheon*, and to commence Yeoman. Peasantry is a Disease (like the Plague) easily caught by Conversation ; it's a Colour that takes on any Subject, and seldom wears off : Why then shall a Person of Honour forfeit his Patent without Treason ? Clowns are a sort of encroaching Animals ; give an Inch, they'll take an Ell, and repay your Familiarity with Contempt and Out-rage : If you intend to oblige 'em to a Distance, stoop not below your Station, nor set them on equal Ground ; if once you make 'em Companions, they'll usurp the Authority of Masters ; for they want Prudence to manage a Familiarity, but not Impudence to abuse it : But take care not to Brow-beat 'em, nor pretend to keep 'em under too severe Discipline ; for the most despicable and cowardly Creatures, if forc'd, will turn and fly in your Face.

VIII.

Some Gentlemen are so punctilious and nice, that they look on Business as a thing below their Level : No, they'll
not

not look on their Accounts, though their Estate lies in an Agony; as if there were no Difference between *Prudence* and *Trading*. But certainly, Wisdom jars not with Quality; and I hope, one may be a good Husband without turning Clown: It's no Branch of a Gentleman's Prerogative to be bubbled out of House and Home. When Expences run high, is it not fit at least to provide against Fraud and Circumvention? Prodigality on the one side, and Fraud on the other, will soon drain an Estate to the Lees. Do not therefore all by Deputy: To trust a Steward too much, is to expose his Virtue. Honesty is not always Proof against Temptation; Men often cheat without Scruple, when they can do it without Fear. Remember, that Nobility stript of Means, makes no genteel Figure; it can't stand without golden Supporters: Model therefore your Expences by your Income, and reflect you possess Lands, not Mines; *two* Thousand expended, and *one* received, will not balance Accounts at the Year's End: If you are wise live on the Crop, not on the Land; convey not a Lordship to *London* in a Bill of Exchange, nor carry *Acres* in your Pocket; they thrive well in Country Air, but fall into Consumptions and Heeticks at *White-Hall* and *Groom-Porters*, and soon expire; and then you must run upon the *Common*, or live on Charity or Courtesy; or *Chamelean-like*, on the Air, unless you had rather turn Knight-Errand on the King's High-way, or take up your Quarters at *Tyburn*. Believe me, *Neander*, Poverty is unfashionable in our Days, and Dependance uneasy; take Care therefore of the main Chance, lay by a Reserve for Age and Accidents: A new Lordship does not (like a *Phoenix*) jump out of the Ashes of the old: No, when it is gone, Hope follows it; nothing remains but Beggary, Contempt, Despair, and Repentance.

Be neither *Covetous* nor *Profuse*; Extreame are vicious; that seems less genteel, and this more foolish. I hate to see a Gentleman (like a Snail) draw in his Figure to save his Purse, and not only want the Conveniences, but even the Necessaries of Life in the Face of Abundance: This is almost to antedate Misery, and to turn the Fable of *Tantalus* into a real Story. I wou^d no more trust such a *Miser*, than a *Foot-Pad* or a *Cut-Purse*; he who loves Money more than himself, will infallibly rate it above

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Honesty,

Honesty, and he'll stretch a Point, and unlose Conscience when Opportunity opens any Prospect of Gain: For to a *Miser* Knavery and Cozenage are unquestionable *Axioms*, and ought to be supposed as a *Postulatum*: In a Word, it's a base Employment to lie on Earth, and to stand Centinel to Interest; I would neither fawn on Money for Money's sake; nor *duck* and *drake* it away for a Frolick: No, I would not part with my Liberty for a *Spanish Flota*, nor with a Shilling for a good Morrow; that would be to overvalue Slavery; and this to under rate Silver.

Let your Equipage run even with your Purse and Quality. Starve not your self to feed Laqueys; nor give 'em a Coach (as *N. N.* did) to save their Liveries. Handsome Regales sometimes buoy up Credit, cherish Friendship, nourish Mirth, and breath Life and Spirit into Conversation; though they sink your Purse, they do not drain it; at least you receive Credit for your Money.

IX.

A continual Application to Business works upon the Brain, it exhausts the Spirits, and undermines Health: Nature must not be run down, allow it time to breath; if you are always on the Spur, you'll jade it. Exchange therefore sometimes your serious Employments for honest and genteel Recreations; they refresh the Mind, unburthen Nature, enliven the Faculties, and pour new Life and Vigour into the Body: Chuse those that are more diverting and less expensive; a Pleasure over-purchased is a real Torment, and then if they require Study and Application, you do not so much ease Nature as change the Burthen. I would not have you venture upon Games of Hazard, unless Civility oblige you, and even then stake no more, than you dare lose without Passion: Those Plays, like Quick-Sands, swallow Estates at a sitting; they devour a Man's Patience, and cast Nature into a Ferment. Good God! How uneasy have I seen Gamesters? Methought they sat on Thorns or Tenters; you might see Passion in their Gestures, and read Despair on their Faces; they broke through all their Barriers of Modesty and *Decorum*, and diced away their Money first, and then flung Patience after it. Had Force stretcht these Gamesters on that Rack, I should have pitied

tied their Misfortune; but when I reflected they were their own Executioners, let 'em suffer (said I) nothing but Stripes can teach Fools Wisdom, nor restore Madmen to their Wits.

I met once Sir N. N. an old Acquaintance; Whither so fast (said I) old Friend? I am, replied he, on an Expedition; You are methinks (answered I again) too crazy for a Winter Campaign, and too old to turn *Marodeur*, or Partizan: Nay, (said he) my Business lies within Doors: In short, I am bound for St. James's, where I intend to fling away a hundred Guineas. To fling away a hundred Guineas, said I! Prithee if you are overcharged with Coin, favour me with the Burthen; you'll play the Fool at least with a better Grace, and least Trouble. But the Proposal did not relish; he wou'd (Gentleman-like) keep his Word, though he lost his Purse; and had rather forfeit his Estate than his Credit. He invited me to accompany him; away we drove to the Place of Rendezvous, where we found his Antagonist ready to encounter: Down they sat, and to't they went; at the beginning the Dice favour'd my old Knight so strangely, that I thought good Luck and he were of Intelligence. Lord! How the old Gentleman crow'd! Joy danc'd through every Joint, you might see it flush in his Face, and gild the Decays of Nature. In fine, good Luck seem'd to have fil'd off his Account twenty Years, and to have put as many more to his Credit; but then if good Humour sat on this side of the Table, bad sat on the other; the young Squire first took the Pet, then Clouds began to rise, which made me expect a Tempest; nor was I deceived in my Conjecture, for immediately away fly the Dice with a Brace of Curses at their Heels; then Fortune is halled to the Bar, arraigned and condemned: Providence brings up the Reer of the Criminals; you wou'd have thought this one and twenty came in a direct Line from *Hercules*, he play'd the *Furioso* so lively.

And now Sir N. N. was entring the Haven with his golden Fleece; when on a sudden the Wind chopt about, and blew in his Teeth; the Tables are turned, the Scene is changed, the Knight fumes, and the Squire triumphs; one curses the Dice, the other gives 'em his Blessing: They steer their Passions by the Cube, and vary

with the Casts. In fine, my Friend stood to his Word; he left the Field, and a hundred Guineas to the Victor, and lost all Gravity and Moderation. I accompanied him to his Lodgings; but I found he was even lurcht of good Nature also. Well (said I) do you call this Play? Can Sport and Anxiety, Fear and Despair stand together? Hell and Heaven are as compatible: I would as soon for Diversion take a turn upon the Rack, or lay my Head between the Anvil and the Hammer; these Torments are not greater; but I am sure are less expensive.

Neander, You may learn by this, how ill these Plays deserve the Name of Recreation; fly 'em therefore as the Plague, they prey upon Content, corrode Satisfaction, and in Conclusion swallow Estates, and commend Nobility to the Parish.

Hawking and Hunting are more manly, more genteel, and more diverting; these Sports are almost as ancient as our Nature, they have kept up their Reputation in spite of all the Vicissitudes of Time and Fortune; but then they must be taken with Moderation, like Physick for Health, not like Meat for Diet. To range eternally in Woods and Thickets after Beasts, is rather the Office of a Keeper, than the Sport of a Gentleman. I blame not the Recreation, but the Excess: For though Hunting be a Royal Pastime, it's certainly a base and servile Employment.

Nean. Pray what is your Opinion of Dancing and Musick? Are they genteel Accomplishments?

Ensch. No doubt: They embellish Quality, and give a pretty Turn to Breeding; they furnish a Man with all the little Ingredients necessary for a *quaint Address*, and usher him into Company with Advantage; they relieve a drooping Discourse: For when Reason runs low, and Conversation languishes, a Stroke of the Fiddle, a Song or a *Sarabrand* well perform'd may enliven it: But don't over-rate these Talents, nor place 'em among the first-rate Qualifications of a Gentleman; for in reality they only fit you up for a modish Address, and a Female Entertainment. Let a Man rather trim up his Mind than his Body: Those Embellishments are more *noble and rich* that lie in the Brain, than those that sink into the Feet, or *perch* on the Finger's end.

X. When

X.

When Innocence left the World, Cloaths came into Fashion ; they were only invented as a Screne to Nakedness, and a Defence to Decency ; you must not therefore invert the Institution, nor turn the Marks of Infamy into Badges of Grandeur ; for it's a Madness to Pride in our Shame, and to look big because we are poor and indigent : Indeed a Gentleman should not clatter in *Sabots*, nor trudge about in *Linsy-Woolsey*. Quality under such a Disguise would make a slovenly Figure : Be neat without Gaudiness, Genteel without Affectation : In fine, the Taylor must take Measure both of your Purse and of your Quality, as well as of your Person : For a Suit that fits the Character, is more *a-la-mode* than that which fits well on the Body. I have seen some Fops over-shoot Extravagance ; they ransack'd all the Shops in *Pater-Noster-Row* and *Cheapside* for the Matter, and consulted the whole Company of Merchant-Tailors for the Form ; a Man of War might be rigg'd with less Noise, and sometimes at less Expence : Now, though fine Feathers make fine Birds, yet surely gawdy Trappings can't make fine Gentlemen ; for the Embellishments of Quality are Wit, Judgment and Behaviour ; an Air that's noble without Haughtiness, and condescending without Meanness. Now these Qualifications lodge in the Soul, they lie in the Head, not on the Back ; the Effects indeed run to the Superficies, but the Cause sculks out of sight.

I suppose we put not off our Nobility at Night, nor put it on in the Morning at the *Toylet* ; why then are we smitten with Drapery, and dote on Finery ? This must be understood with regard to Decency ; Allowance must be given to Custom and Opinion ; a Gentleman must not be so unpretending in Appearance, as to affect Slovenliness ; this is to sacrifice one Vice to another, to atone for Vanity with Nastiness ; walk between these two Extremes ; though you use both Shops and Tailors, depend on neither ; build not your Reputation on Silks, nor your Worth on Stuffs : For in a word, they are mere Excrements of poor Animals : Now to make the basest Part of Worms and Sheep, the top of our Greatness, is in Effect to commence Beast. *Neander*, put on a good Humour, a fine Behaviour, a noble Disposition, and
 C 3 you'll

you'll keep the Mob at a Distance ; but whosoever pretends to dazle Men into Respect, merely with Scarlet and Gold Lace, will fall short of his Pretensions. Men are not awed by Cloaths, but Vertue : Old *Fabricius* in his *Ferkin*, and *Curius* in the Chimney-Corner, were more esteemed and feared than *Caligula* or *Heliogabalus*, in all their State and Bravery.

XI.

Let not one Action stoop below the Level of your Quality ; be not deceived in the Notion of Honour ; this is a necessary *Caveat* in the mad Age we live. Some confound Honour with Profit, others with Pleasure ; but by the Rules of this new System, Pilfering and Lewdness are dignifying Qualifications : And so Foot-pads, Cut-purses, and Debauchees may pretend to the Right of *Peerage* ; but others seat it on the Sword's Point, and persuade themselves it consists in slaughter ; as if there were no difference between Honour and Savageness, between a Gentleman and a Butcher : These are a Race of *European Cannibals*, who worry their *Species*, and devour Man's Flesh ; true *Anthropophagi*, who sport in Blood, and turn Slaughter into a Diversion ; they are known by the Names of *Scowrers* and *Duellists* ; but these Appellations are too innocent for so base, so barbarous an Employment ; they stand guilty of Murder by the Laws of the Land, and therefore are mark'd with Shame and Infamy by the Government : But besides they are condemn'd by the Law of God, and so are at once outlawed by Religion and the State : What, I beseech you, can stigmatize and degrade a Practice more efficaciously than this double Excommunication ?

But, says a Gentleman, shall I receive an Affront ? Yes, I hope, rather than a Stab, or a Halter ; that may be retrieved, but a Wound in the Heart, or a disjointed Neck, are irremediable. But must I swallow *the Lye too* ? Why not, if you deserve it ? The Punishment exceeds not the Crime, and methinks it's reasonable for the Penalty and the Fault to go together : For pray reflect if the Imputation of a Lye be so offensive to Quality, the thing it self is much more ; and therefore you ought rather to take those Imputations as Admonitions than Affronts.

But suppose it be a Calumny, I wou'd either contemn it, or pardon it; a Man must undervalue the Benefit of Ease, and the Price of Life to sell it for so inconsiderable a Trifle; for in the Judgment of the Law it's nothing, it will not bear an Action. Now seeing we submit to the Opinion of the Judges in other Differences, why are we refractory in this Case? The Law is the Standard not only of Right and Wrong; but of Honour and Infamy: And seeing it will not take Cognizance of so petty an Aspersion, it supposes it below Notice.

Ay! But Custom has ennobled Revenge: And we had better be out of the World, than out of the Fashion. Under Favour, the King is the only Fountain of Honour, and I cannot find he ever made over to Custom this Prerogative Royal.

But what is this Custom you talk of? (*i. e.*) a Club of *Desperadoes* without Religion, without Conscience, a Pack of *Renegado Christians*, who are a Scandal to their Profession, and a Shame to their Nature; vote Murder a brave Action, and you obtrude this Atheistical Error from the universal Opinion of Mankind, for the Standard of Honour and Bravery. Why? Such Men's Judgments are as false as their Principles, and their Opinions as depraved as their Manners; because Rascals extol Perjury, Highway-men Robbery, and Debauchees Lewdness, are these creditable and innocent Vocations? Because Perjury, Robbery, and Licentiousness are common, are they lawful?

Besides, can any thing be more extravagantly foolish, than the Punctilio's of a Duellist? One has given me the Lye; to wipe off the Affront, I must provoke him to tilt at my Lungs. Ah, but Right stands for you! But what if Fortune stands for your Antagonist? Right is a dull Weapon, unless Skill and good Luck manage it; the clandestine Revenges of the *Italians* are cruel and diabolical, but at least they are less foolish than ours; they will not bath their wounded Honour in their own Blood, but in that of their Enemy; and therefore they attack unawares, or by Proxy; but we revenge at our own Expence, nay, and upon our selves, and sometimes at a Disadvantage too; as if to retrieve our Honour we must die like Fools. I know not what Charms others may see in a Stab, I had rather be sent into the other

World by the Hangman than a Duellist; a Duel is an ill Distemper to die of, though possibly Atheists may think it a genteel one; and I am confident these Martyrs of Honour will be discomposed when they find their Reception in the next Life falls short of their Expectation.

Death, *Neander*, is a great Leveller. Titles, Quality, Wealth, with all their Appurtenances, leaves us with the last Breath: A Clown will meet with Respect if he be Innocent, and a Prince with Contempt if Guilty; our Treatment will answer our Actions, not our Birth; a Scavenger that dies in Peace with God will be conveyed into Glory; and a Lord that expires in Sin into Torments.

XII.

Some Gentlemen refine Breeding too much; they affect a Singularity in Behaviour as well as in Religion, and so make themselves ridiculous to appear genteel; these are a *Heterogeneous* Race of Gentlemen some call Fops, and others Beaus; they are a Compound of Farce and Ceremony, a Mixture of *Mimick* and *Tragedian*; had their Mothers made a Voyage to the *Indies*, I should suspect they had some Relation to an *Ape*: For certainly they are of a mixt Spices, and often the Beast predominates, but always the Coxcomb; if the Beau has more Wit, the Ape has more Judgment; these Gentlemen speak like Puppets, and walk like Clock-work; they pass the Morning between the *Glass* and the *Toylet*, and summon to their Levy the whole *Posse* of *Tailors*, *Barbers*, and *Sempstresses*; they value more the Art of dressing well, than the knack of paying: And whilst others admire their Folly, like young *Narcissus*, they contemplate their own Beauty: Pray leave these People and their Behaviour to themselves, and if you can't avoid their Company, catch not their *Grimaces*. It's true, you must prepare for an Attack; for like People struck with the Plague, they love to give the Infection; if they find you resty, they'll not fail to direct your Motions, and anatomize your Comportment, and then you must expect to be lampoon'd in Verse, or pelted in Prose; but they always meet with poor *Cassandra's* Fortune, never to be believed; their *Yeas* go for *No's*, and their *Satyr*s for *Panegyrics*: I might enlarge upon this Subject,

ject, but I fear I have already trespass'd upon your Patience.

Nean. I see, dear *Eusebius*, you are a stranger to my Constitution, I am not so soon talked down; how can I spend my time better, than in learning how to spend it well?

After a short Discourse of indifferent Things, *Neander* took leave of *Eusebius* with a Promise to return the next Morning. He kept his Word, and *Eusebius* spoke thus.



DIALOGUE III.

Eusebius instructs Neander in the Duty of a Christian.

Euseb. IT's harder (dear *Neander*) to describe the part of a Christian, than that of a Gentleman, and a Matter of higher Importance to act it well; if a Gentleman falls below his Character, his Reputation may suffer, but not his Soul: He may not stand fair in Men's Opinion, but this is a trivial Misfortune; for pray what great Advantage is it to be esteem'd by those who cannot be sufficiently blam'd? Alas! their esteem is so insignificant, that it's neither able to credit nor disgrace.

But oh! if our Life swerves from the Laws of Christianity, and if Death takes us away in this Disorder, we are undone for ever, eternally lost! without hope of Change, or of retrieving our Misfortune: Upon this Point our all depends; if we act a Christian well, we shall be received into the Joys of the Just: But if ill, into the Punishments of the Impious: And both these States are everlasting, both immense, *that* in Pleasure, *this* in Pain.

Now when the Gain on the one side is so vast, and the Loss on the other so exorbitant, does not Reason tell us that we ought to bend all our Care, all our Application to discharge our selves of the Duties of a Christian? I will therefore draw up a short Scheme of the most pressing Offices of your Profession, and furnish you with Motives, able to persuade you to comply with them.

I. The

I.

The chief Reason why Men live at Random is, because they have forgot their Errand ; they fancy themselves to be the Work of Chance, the Off-spring of Hazard, Creatures of Pleasure placed on the Land (as the *Leviathan* is in the Water) to sport and play ; but certainly we must have small Acquaintance with the Dignity of our Nature, and a mean Opinion of our Greatness to frame such wild Idea's. Our Understanding is too noble to be buried in Dung and Rubbish ; and our Soul too spiritual to be condemned by Nature to the base Employments of Brutes.

No, no, *Neander* : God's Omnipotence framed us, and his Goodness designed us for himself alone. He has ennobled us with Reason to know his Greatness, with a Will to love his Goodness, and with a Soul to enjoy his Perfection. He is our *Alpha* and our *Omega*, the Origin of our Being, and the end of our Creation. It's impossible for us to be miserable with him, or happy without him.

II.

But, though we are made to enjoy God in Heaven, it's uncertain, whether we shall ever land at this thrice happy Haven of the Blessed ; for God has decreed to communicate this supreme Felicity as a Reward, not as a Gift : We must take this City by Storm, not by Capitulation : We must enter *Repee a la main : Et violenti rapiunt illud*. But if the Difficulty cramps our Courage, if it baulks our Resolution, if we miscarry in the Enterprize, or fail in the Execution, we are undone for ever ; we must take up our Habitation in Hell, and dwell perpetually with Fire and Brimstone. This we believe (*Neander*) and the bare Thought of it sometimes congeals the very Blood in our Veins, and strikes us with Horror and Amazement. One Theft, one Murder, one Fornication unrepented, casts us into a Lake of Fire, into a Vale of Torments, into a sad Mansion of Despair, where we shall always burn and never be consumed ; always die, and ever live the Object of God's Wrath, and the perpetual Monument of our Folly and Disobedience. These two Points are, as it were, Postulatums in Morality, and God has been pleased to reveal 'em in almost

almost every Chapter and Page of the New Testament, that he might allure us to our Duty by the charming Prospect of Heaven, or scare us to it by the dismal Representation of Hell.

III.

We can't tax God of Severity, nor complain of his Unkindness; for though on the one Hand he draws up in *Battalia* all the Terrors of an unhappy Eternity to fright us; on the other he displays all the Treasures of Heaven to whet our Hope, and animate our Courage; nor does he lay our Salvation in the Hands of Chance, or trust it to the Care of our Enemies. Yet he has entrusted every Man with his own Welfare; so that we cannot be miserable, unless we conspire against our selves, and turn Traytors to our own Interest. If therefore we miscarry, must not the Fault lie at our own Door? If we will be so stupid, as to fling up our Claim to Heaven; so void of Reason as to leap into Hell; do we not deserve to forfeit the one, and feel the other? A Man, who in spight of Prayers and Tears will vault down a Precipice, deserves to measure the Height of it by the Fall; and if he breaks his Neck, who will not rather laugh at his Misfortune than pity it?

IV.

Had God tied up our Happiness to harder Conditions, he had not over-rated it. For all we can either do or suffer in time, bears no Proportion with an Eternal Reward; though he be our Master, he has behaved himself to us with all the Tenderness of an indulgent Father. For he has drawn up Articles so Advantageous for us, that we must be mad to complain, either of Circumvention or hard Dealing: He requires nothing but Love and Obedience. Now who can in Reason refuse to love an infinite Beauty? Or to obey an omnipotent Power? We pay him Love and Obedience by keeping his Commandments, which are only hard to those that resolve to transgress 'em. *Et mandata ejus gravia non sunt.* Nay, they are so agreeable to Reason, that we must cross upon our Nature, before we can violate 'em, and almost cease to be Men, when we begin to be Sinners. In a Word, to be happy in the next World, we must be vertuous in this. Vertue is your Duty, *Neander*; and if you practise

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it seriously, 'twill prove your Pleasure. For God has so interwoven our Duty with our Satisfaction, that it's impossible for a Man to be innocently unhappy.

V.

Though Vertue be an excellent Thing, it may be abused. It lies within the reach of Fancy, Illusion, and Misapplication; there is false Vertue as well as adulterate Coin: And as the *Lacedemonians* trickt up their Gods in the *Spartan* Dress; so oftentimes Men model Vertue by their own Passions. I have seen a morose Zealot eternally harangue against the Corruption of the Age; all was wrong, all vicious that cross'd his sour Humour. One would have thought God had constituted him *Inspector-General* of Mankind; he kickt and flung after so unchristian a Rate, 'twas dangerous to come within his Reach. Now, though Scripture and Reason call this *Sin*, he mistook it (good Man) for Vertue. His Error was Proof against Homily and Exhortation. You might have sooner perswaded him out of his Christian Name, than out of his peevish Humour.

As I esteem nothing more than true and genuine Vertue, so I abhor a Hypocrite. I hate those Mountebanks of the Spirit, who turn Piety into a Trade; who pray themselves into Livings, and whine themselves into Reputation; who practice Humility out of Pride, and Charity out of Spight; who preach up the most severe Morals in publick, and condemn 'em in private; whose Zeal is Censure, whose Justice is Interest, and Piety a Cover to Vanity. I have heard these *Tartars* lash the World to Excess, whilst they courted it to Extravagance: They extolled Solitude, yet were always in Company, and praised Vertue, when they practised Vice. In one word, this Race of Men is a Medley of Opposites, humble without, and proud within; arrogant to Excess, and on Occasions submissive beyond Measure; all Fire, and all Smoak; Saints in Appearance, and Sinners in Effect.

Others place *Dagon* and the *Ark* on the same Altar. Like *Jehu*, they blend Good with Evil, adore God in the Temple, and Golden Calves in *Dan* and *Bethel*: Sometimes they are *all Spirit*, sometimes *all Body*: Now, they regale their Senses with a thousand Ragousts of the most refined Lewdness: By and by they feast their
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Souls with the most high-seasoned Piety : One Day they surfeit with Fasting, another with Feasting : Yesterday they were tired with Kneeling, to Day with Dancing : They seldom miss a Sermon, never a Play : If you see a Prayer-Book in their Hand, you may swear there is a Lampoon in their Pocket : And if the Bible lies on their Desk, a Romance stands on the Shelf ; so that they are half Saint, and half Devil, but all Monster. I knew a He-Devotee, who would speak so feelingly of the Excellency of Chastity, one would have taken him for a *Baptist* ; yet at the same time he entertain'd a *Miss* in a Corner ; and though on *Sunday* he appear'd in the Church with Respect before the *Lord*, all the Week he paid Homage to the *Lady* : This is not Vertue, but an *Oleo* of Vices : This is to worship God as the Soldiers did our Saviour, with Outrage and Blasphemy. You may easily infer, that the Duty of a Christian obliges you to detest and abhor such a Conduct, but not to imitate it ; one Defect tarnishes Vertue. *Bonum ex integra causa, malum ex quolibet defectu.*

That Man is truly Vertuous, who is neither proud in good Fortune, nor abject in bad ; who desires nothing but Heaven, and fears nothing but Hell ; who avenges Affronts with Favours, and Injuries with Pardon ; who is severe to himself, and easy to his Neighbour ; who speaks well of all but himself ; and never pardons his own Defects, nor censures those of his Brethren. In a word, *Neander*, *Do Good and fly from Evil*, is the Sum of your Duty. This is Vertue in *Short-Hand*, Perfection in *Epitome*, and Heaven in *Reversion*.

VI.

That Part of your Duty is of the greatest Importance, that immediately belongs to God ; he is our Maker and our Sovereign, we are indebted to his Power for our Being, to his Goodness for our Conversation ; from him we expect the Reward of our Vertues, and the Punishment of our Vices. Return him therefore a thousand Thanks for the Favours you have received from the first Moment of your Creation ; you can't begin the Acknowledgment too soon, you can't repeat it too often, because you can never thank him enough ; respect him as your Father, serve him as your Master, and fear him

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as your Judge ; neither forget his Kindness in Prosperity, nor blaspheme his Conduct in Adversity : He is no less amiable when he frowns, than when he smiles ; when he wounds, than when he heals. And therefore kiss the sacred Hand that strikes, as well as that which stroaks you : He always designs your Good, unless by Murmurs and Impatience you turn his Blessing into Curses ; and then praise his Conduct, but condemn your own.

Ah ! *Neander*, a thousand, thousand times happy is that Man, who flings up all his Concerns into the Hands of Providence, and ties up his Desires to the Laws of Obedience ; he carries in his Breast a little Paradise, and a Heaven in Prospect ; he sits above the reach of Fortune, and beholds with an Air of Unconcernedness under his Feet, all those Storms and Tempests that dash in Pieces other Mens Felicity ; he neither desires good Success, nor fears Disappointment ; he opens his Door no less chearfully to Want, than to Abundance : *In fine*, he knows, that Command is God's Prerogative, and Submission his Duty. Can Imagination paint a more solid, a more sincere Satisfaction, than neither to languish under the Torments of Hope, nor to sink under the Billows of Despair ; than to subject our Appetite to Reason, and this to God, our omnipotent Maker and merciful Redeemer ?

This Submission raises Man to the Height of Virtue and Happiness : For whosoever bows his Neck to the sweet Yoak of Providence, neither amuses his Thoughts with visionary Hopes, nor extravagant Fears ; he lives on his own Fund, and keeps his Desires within the Compass of his Power ; he is content with the Portion God has assigned him ; this he holds only in Fee, and is ready to leave it at the first Command. He neither affects to be less, nor aspires to a higher Station ; he would be just as he is, because God has made him so.

Neand. This State of Indifference is a fine thing in Theory and Speculation, but impossible in Practice, and is rather to be wisht, than hoped for.

Euseb. Pray remember that desponding Thoughts only serve to pall the Spirits, and to blast generous Resolutions. Things are often impossible, because Cowardice makes 'em so : Check Fancy, and you'll not encounter those Difficulties in the Practice : Pusillanimity and Non-Expe-
rience

ience conjure up to fright you. For God is no Epicurean Deity, so taken up with the Enjoyment of his own Felicity, that he has no leisure to cast a Thought on the Concerns of poor Mortals below : No, no, *Neander* ; his Providence is as boundless as his Being ; he did not divest himself of the Government of the World, when he had made it ; he can't either forfeit his Title to the Administration of the Universe, or abdicate it. That Hand which made all Things, must of Necessity continue 'em, otherwise they'd make a speedy *Exit*, and sink into their primitive *Nothing* : He has assigned *every Being* its Station ; even the *Worm* and the *Pismire*, he sets 'em their Task, teaches 'em to work, and through a thousand Labyrinths leads all things to their perfect Ends. Now certainly, he that created all sublunary Beings for Man, cannot be thought to withdraw his Care from him, as if he were below his Love or Concern : No, no ; he counts the Hairs of his Head, and registers his Steps in the *Folio* of his *Omniscience*.

Now God being Goodness it self, he can't wait upon us with an ill Design. He stands over us as a Guardian, not as a Spy ; as a Friend, not as an Enemy ; he considers our Constitution, and pries into all Circumstances, that he may time his Favours, and so enhance their Value, by adapting 'em to our Necessities.

As his Goodness assures us he means well, so his Wisdom gives us Security and Caution, that he can't be deceived in the Choice of those things he designs for us ; he can't give us a Stone for a Loaf, nor a Scorpion for a Fish, nor Poison for a Medicine : So that we are sure on the one side, that nothing befalls us unawares, but either by his Permission or Command ; and on the other, that he either permits or commands it for our Good ; and that it will certainly prove so, unless we defeat his charitable Designs by Impatience or Blasphemy, and by a strange self-creative Power turn his Blessings into Curses. Now, what Misfortune can make Impression on a Mind so strongly fenced ? It will stand the most fiery Trial, without an *Oh*, without a *wry Face* ; for it has both Faith and Reason to support it ? And then he that will weep that has all the Reason in the World to laugh, must be fond of Tears, and in Love with Torment.

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It's true, this Doctrine is extinct in Practice: We snarl at Providence, we dispute his Orders, and burlesque his Decrees; we scream out at the lightest Touch of his gentle Hand, and turn our selves into all the Postures of Impatience; we neither receive his Favours with Thanks, nor Correction with Patience.

But this irrational Conduct argues much Peevishness and more Infidelity. For these People must either doubt of his Power, or dare not trust his Goodness; and then they deny both by Illation.

Ah! dear *Neander*, commit your Concerns to the Management of God; ask no Temporal Blessing, but with a *fiat voluntas tua*; refuse no Affliction; receive that with Gratitude, this with Resignation; and if you can't desire Crosses, at least accept 'em, and remember always that those things often prove more prejudicial we pray for, than those we fear.

We are an *America*, an undiscovered Region to ourselves, our Desires fly not only before Reason, but Reflection; so that we are so far from knowing what is good for us, that we know not what we would be at: Our Fancy over-shoots Nature, and (like a Fool's Paradise) represents Objects in borrowed Colours and false Shapes: Deluded therefore by vain *Glasses* and deceitful *Opticks*, we dote by Hazard, and hate at Random; we embrace a deformed *Leah* for a charming *Rachel*; court Happiness, and espouse Misery. But God, who builds our Fabrick, knows our Constitution; he dives into our Temper, and comprehends all those things we either eagerly pursue, or passionately fly from; he sees the Employment of these will convey us to Eternal Felicity, and the Possession of those into endless Torments. He therefore gives what we feared, and refuses what we desired. Now, is it not a Kindness to be thus mercifully cruel? Is it not a Favour to baulk our Pretensions, and a real Misfortune to be Fortunate?

VII.

We can never withdraw our selves from God's Immanency: He reigns in Hell, no less than in Heaven: He exercises his Justice among the Damned, and his Mercy among the Blessed; he dwells in Woods, and walks in Cities; he retires with us into Solitude, and accompa-

nies us in Conversation ; he is in all Places, and sees all Things ; he fathoms our Desires, he counts our Words, he scans our Actions, and reads our Thoughts.

Imprint this Truth with indelible Characters in your Memory, and recommend it to your daily Consideration ; 'twill teach you both Caution and Respect ; 'twill curb the disorderly Sallies of Nature, and bind your Passion to its good Behaviour. You will not have the Face to step beyond the Bounds of Duty, nor scarce be tempted to transgress it. Nature, I confess, is unruly, 'twill run away with us, unless we keep a strong and watchful Hand over it ; but then the very Thought that God stands by, will blow over those Flames of Passion, that dim Reason, and hurry us into Transgressions.

Before a grave Man we dare not fall into Indecency ; his very Presence gives a Check to Appetite, and stops Sensuality in its full Career : So that Lewdness and Debauchery are forc'd to retire, and give Place to Shame.

Who violates the Law in the Face of Authority, that has both Will and Power to revenge the Contempt, gives an evident Proof, that either Life is uneasy to him, or that he is not *compos mentis*, and by consequence deserves *Bedlam* rather than *Tyburn*. Yet human Justice acts in a narrow Sphere ; it reaches but to Life, and can't pursue the Criminal beyond the Grave. If therefore the Sight of a Man, and the Apprehension of Death, have such a Transcendency over us, as to cool the Fire of Passion, to discountenance an unbeseeming Sally, and to repel any Assault upon our Vertue ; certainly, a strong Persuasion, that God is present, that he looks on us to crown our Vertues, and to chastise our Vices, can't be less efficacious ; for he is Sovereign Disposer of our Souls and Bodies ; he is able to tumble these into *nothing*, and those into *Hell* ; we may baffle human Justice, either by Flight, Money, or Favours, but we cannot fly out of God's Dominion ; his Anger can neither be appeased with Bribes, nor softned with Tears, nor overcome with Entreaties.

Now, a Man who with the Eyes of Faith continually, beholds this dreadful Majesty hovering about him, with the Reward of Vertue in one Hand, and the Sword of Revenge in the other, will take Care of his Behaviour, and not sell his Innocence for a Fleet Pleasure in Hand,

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and Eternal Torments in Remainder. Let me therefore once more intreat you (by all that is Dear, by all that is Sacred) to carry this Consideration along with you in all your Business, in all your Pastimes, its Company will neither be troublesome nor expensive, but I am sure it will be advantageous.

VIII.

God's Infinite Greatness entitles him to Homage, and our Dependance calls upon us to pay it: We cannot acknowledge too soon his Authority, because we cannot respect it too much: We are the Work of his Hands, the Object of his Mercy, and shall once be Eternally that of his Love or of his Hatred; of his Love, if we execute his Commands; but of his Hatred, if we transgress 'em. Justice therefore and Gratitude; Hope of Heaven, and Fear of Hell, preach Vertue and Obedience to his most holy Injunctions. Yet, alas! this Voice of Thunder is not able to awake our young Gallants, (like so many bewitched *Sampsons*) they sleep in the Bosom of fascinating Pleasures, that lull 'em into pleasing Trances, imaginary Delights, to plunge 'em into real Torments. One would think they either disbelieved a *future State*, they are so unconcerned for the *present*; or that they had a Patent to do ill; or at least an Assurance of Pardon and Repentance. Their Study is to learn Sins; their Employment to commit 'em, and grand Diversion to applaud their Impieties. Tell these deluded Creatures they walk over Precipices, and sport on the Brink of Destruction: That to live a Debauchee, is to die a Reprobate: They answer your charitable Admonition with a Joak, or a Frown, and very coldly reply, that Youth was made for Pleasure, and old Age for Repentance. Good God! that Men of Wit and Parts should so wretchedly fool themselves into Ruin. Were our Souls no longer lived than our Bodies, did they sink into nothing when we ceased to breathe, that Atheistical Rant, *Ede, bibè, gaude, cras moriemur*, would not be quite unreasonable. Could we look into the Future, and read our Destiny, could we cast up a Horoscope of our Death, as Astrologers do of our Life; were we sure that *cras moriemur*, we might equip our selves to Day for a Journey to Hell; and make to morrow a great
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Preparations for Heaven. But, alas! we dwell in a Region, where Certainties are so twisted with Uncertainties, that though we know we must die, yet we are as ignorant of the Time, Place, and Manner, as the Child unborn. Perchance Divine Justice may arrest us in the very Heat of our Lewdness: It may drag us from the Stews to Judgment: The first Time we close our Eye-lids may be the last: We may only sleep in this World to wake in the next; we may only open our Eyes to see strange Flames, and return to our Senses to feel 'em.

Sudden Deaths are not Miraculous. The Bills of Mortality assure us they are too ordinary: But these Accidents surprize your Debauchees oftner, than those who live within the Bounds of Temperance and Moderation. They over-charge Nature with continual Excess, and set all the Humours of the Body in an Uproar: And how easy it is for these Humours in such a Hurry and Tumult; to crowd in upon the Heart? Or to fly up to the Brain? Or to impede the playing of the Lungs, and on sudden stop Respiration?

But though God should deal more mercifully with these Men than they deserve, though he should give 'em both Time and Leisure to repent, it's ten to one they'll be in their Sins, and carry into the next World those crimes they committed in this.

For two Things are necessary for a thorough Repentance; God's Grace and Man's Co-operation; without that we cannot repent, and without this he will not pardon. If therefore the Difficulty to be overcome be greater at Threescore, than at Twenty, and Grace be less, it's odds they'll not repent at Threescore, but that certainly will be greater, and this infallibly will be less. Therefore it's odds, that the final Resolutions of these unfortunate Gentlemen will vanish into Smoak, and end in eternal Despair and Punishment.

I prove the Difficulty will certainly be greater. Philosophy and Experience teach us, that a frequent Repose into any Disorder ingenders a Habit, (that is,) a Facility and Propension to reiterate the same Actions. And this takes its Force from the Frequency of the Practice: For though in Natural Productions there is a certain Point of Growth and Perfection, yet in Morals there is no such Term, both vicious and vertuous Habits

may go on *in infinitum*: Hence it happens, that an inveterate Custom twists and winds it self into our very Nature; it sinks into our Bones, and enters into our Constitution. Now, if all the frightful Reproaches of Conscience, all the Calls of Grace, the dismal Prospect of those Shades below, the charming Allurements of Heaven above, were too feeble to restrain Nature alone; will they silence the Clamours of mutinous Passions, curb the Violence of Nature back'd by Custom, and inflamed with ill Habits? No, no: Nature seconded by a Habit, (like a Loadstone armed with Iron) draws ten times stronger. He who groans under the Weight of a Feather, will fall under that of a Milstone.

Now as ill Habits byass Nature, and make it more impetuous, and less governable; so in our Supposition, Grace the chief active Principle, is less. For Grace is a free Gift, no Debt, *aliter Gratia non esset*; we must receive it as a meer Benevolence, and cannot ask it as our Due.

Is it probable God will pour down upon his mortal Enemies these Streams of Favour and Beauty, as plentifully as on his Friends? on those who blaspheme him twenty Years together, as on those who adore him? on those, who abandon their Duty out of a determinate Malice, as on those who fall by Surprise? It's certain he will not: *For God will not be laugh't at*; and can the Wit of Man invent a more compendious, and at the same time a more biting Raillery, than by trampling under Foot this Divine Gift, that cost our great Redeemer Torrents of Sweat, and Rivers of Blood, than by making his Goodness the Ground of our Ingratitude? than by refusing to repent, because he is prone to Pardon? If God be Just, (as certainly he is) he'll stop the Conduit of his Mercy, and rain down a Deluge of Maledictions on those rebellious Giants, that attack the most High, and turn his greatest Attributes against his own Breast.

Nean. What you say (as to the main) is true; but give me leave to tell you, there is a Dash of Hyperbole in your Discourse: Man's Malice can't weary God's Mercy; he can pardon more Sins than Man is able to commit; nay, and will, if we fling our selves at his Feet, and sue for Mercy. A contrite Heart, *Eusebius* is a moving Spectacle, it disarms God's Justice, and

melts it into Mercy ; and as he receives those Prodigals that return, so he furnishes 'em with Grace for their Voyage.

Enseb. Neander, God's Goodness weighs down Man's Malice ; our Obstinacy can't tire his Mercy ; he'll give both Pardon and Heaven to those who ask 'em ; his Word stands engaged, and he can't fly back. But then, where has he promised that inveterate Sinners shall ask Pardon ? It's true also, that the most profligate Debauchees have Grace sufficient to work Repentance. But what signifies a Power to do Good, with a Will to do Evil ? There is not a damned Soul in Hell, that did not once find it self in the same Circumstances. Is it less miserable, because once it might have been happy ? Alas ! this sad Meditation suggests new Matter to their Despair, because it represents their Misery, together with their Folly, as the sole Cause of their Misfortune.

Nean. Pray, *Ensebins*, don't disgrace God's darling Virtue, *Mercy* ; nor condemn poor Sinners to the worst of Torments, *Despair*. *Whilst there is Life, there is Hope*. They who never thought of Pardon in their Lives, found it at their Death. What ! he who died for Man, can he have the Heart to damn it ? The very Thief on the Cross, though abandon'd by Men, were caress'd by his loving Saviour ; and for one humble *memento mei*, received Mercy in this World, and Paradise in the other.

Enseb. Mistake me not, (Dear *Neander*) I am not for grasping an Immensity, nor for prescribing Bounds to an infinite Being ; I know God's Mercy is above the Skies ; but then his Justice sinks below the Abyss ; *judicio ejus abyssus multa*. We can't take the Height of that, nor fathom the Depth of this. They are both equal, (i. e.) infinite ; nay, they are the same thing : For Justice is Mercy, armed with Revenge ; and Mercy is Justice, disposed to Pardon ? Why then should we dread it in one Dress, as well as dote on it in the other ? I am not for casting Men into Despair. As it is the greatest of Torments, so it is the blackest of Crimes, and the most irrational : This antedates Damnation, and gives us over to Execution before God has pronounced the Sentence. To damn your selves out of a Fear of being damned, is the Top of Madness ; the *non plus ultra* of Frensy : To think my Salvation impossible, is to make it so ; not to hope

hope for Heaven, is the next way to lose it. But then if I hate Despair, I abhor Presumption; if that leads us to Hell by a direct Line, this does the Business as efficaciously. For can we out-rage our great Master more, than when we bend his august Attributes to our Lewdness, and build the Babel of our Abominations upon his Goodness? And our Crimes upon his Mercy? Is not this to sport with Majesty? To rally Authority? And to play with Goodness? And pray what difference is there between despairing of Mercy, and burlesquing it? This impious Mirth (*Neander*) will once end in Sorrow, and these Peals of Laughter in gnashing of Teeth: But because our Libertines put a great Stress on the good Thief's Conversion, and fancy their Deaths will resemble his, no less than their Lives; 'twill not be amiss to examine the Point.

First, *St. Bernard* tells us, that this Thief's Conversion is the only Example (to be found in Scripture) of a deferred Repentance that was successful. But, with Submission, *St. Bernard* mistook in the Calculation: For this was not properly a deferred Repentance. The Thief answer'd the first Call of his agonizing Saviour; the first Glance of his Sacred Eyes wounded his sinful Soul, and melted his hard Heart into Love and Sorrow.

Secondly, The Thief received Pardon and Paradise. But what did he to deserve this miraculous Favour? He adored Christ, not seated on a Throne of Glory, but covered with Shame and Infamy, torn with Whips, pierced with Thorns, out-raged by his Enemies, forsaken by his Friends: Beside some say, Life was offered this Malefactor, if he would deny Christ: But he chose rather to die with him, and for him, than to live without him. So that now the Cause of his Death was changed, and he who was fastened to the Cross a Robber, expired on it a Martyr.

Thirdly, God sealed his Pardon; but this Act of Grace was granted on the Day of Mercy; and yet of so many Sinners that were Spectators of this bloody Tragedy, we know but this Thief, who was so fortunate as to receive Pardon, and to receive it. Tell me then, dear *Neander*, ought we not rather draw Motives of Fear from the Misfortune of Thousands, than of Presumption from the good Luck of one? If you look on the Right-hand of our dy-

ing Lord, pray cast an Eye upon the Left ; and if you behold on the one side a Saint, you'll discover a Reprobate on the other. Let therefore Gentlemen learn Fear from the Damnation of the one, as well as from the other a dangerous Security. And I counsel all Christians to draw this Conclusion from the different Deaths of these two Malefactors, that it's a Madness to despair, and Temerity to presume ; *Unus est ne desperes, unicus ne presumas.*

Wherefore consecrate the first-fruits of Reason to God ; you can't begin the Practice of Piety too soon, but may too late ; Nature untainted with Vice may be wrought with Ease into any Form, and cast in any Mould. It's a kind of *tabula rasa*, a *Blank*, that almost with the same Facility receives the Characters of *Angel*, and of *Devil* ; but when once it's stained with Sin, when it's byassed by ill Habits, and worse Principles, you will find it stubborn and rebellious. Be not then so foolish as to prefer Danger before Security, and to turn Pleasure into Toil. Take Occasion by the *Fore-top*, it quickly passes, and seldom returns.

IX.

Religion is the Ground-work of Salvation ; and therefore you cannot be too tender of a thing that so nearly concerns your eternal Happiness. I recommend this Point to your Care with greater Eagerness, because at present it lies under all the Disadvantage of Contempt, and I fear the Gentry have a greater Hand in the Scandal, than the Commonalty. Nothing, indeed, enters more frequently in Discourse ; it's the vulgar Topick of Conversation, the Subject of our Heats, the Source of Divisions, and by Consequence of our Misfortunes : Yet not one of a hundred knows the very Meaning of the Word, and not two in a Thousand agree upon the Thing ; the very Ideas we have of it are wild and monstrous.

I have heard with Indignation and Horror, some Gentlemen pronounce *ex Cathedra*, That Religion is a Grievance ; no Duty, because it controuls our most noble Faculty, the Understanding, and enslaves us to blind Obedience.

Others weigh Religion by Interest, and protest, that *Orthodoxy* and *Profit* go together : So that in those Men's

Theology, *Turcism*, with a 1000 l. per Annum, is more credible, than Christianity with 500.

Others again confound Religion with Faction, and so to carry on a black Design strike in with any Conventicle; they cry out for Liberty of Conscience, although they have none for Reformation, though they delight in Tumults, and feign the *Angel* to play the *Fiend*.

Others, like an abandon'd Brat, dropt it at Churchmen's Doors, and fancy it's a Monster of their begetting, *Graft* (say they) *Jugling* and *Interest* brought it forth, whilst *Superstition* and *Policy* maintains it.

But by these Gentlemen's leave, Religion is neither the Product of Spleen, nor the Fruit of Imagination; it's neither a *Statist's* Engine, nor a *Parson's* Invention; it came from Heaven, and was planted on Earth by Christ and his Apostles; and we must either believe it *here*, or burn for our Infidelity *hereafter*; *He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned.*

These are our Saviour's Words, and they will be received, I suppose, by Christians. The Apostle delivers the same Doctrine; *Without Faith it is impossible to please God.* Now without doubt God made Heaven for his Friends, not for his Enemies; for those who please him, not for those who contemn his Laws, and sport with his most peremptory Commands. Again, St. *Augustine* tells us, ** Ubi vera fides non est, nec potest vera esse justitia.* But it's Frenzy and Illusion to excess, to fancy, that a Man not truly just, will be admitted into the eternal Joys of Heaven; it follows therefore very justly that Salvation is a Chymæra out of Christ's Church, and by consequence, that all those Libertine Gentlemen, who play with Religion, and sport with Faith, are in a fair way to deplore eternally their factious Impiety. I would have them spend some cool Thoughts on the Matter, and consider seriously, whether a petty, brutish, nay, atheistical Satisfaction can countervail a perpetual Misery, and whether they would not give more pregnant Proofs of Wit and Judgment by enquiring after the true Religion, than by lampooning all.

* De Ser. Dei in monte. C. 12.

Tell me not you lead a moral Life, you walk by the Light of Reason, and frame your Conduct by its inviolable Maxims; that you neither curse God, nor wrong your Neighbour; that you neither invade his Lands, nor impeach his Reputation; that your Hands are not dipt in Blood, nor your Tongue in Gall; that you defile no Man's Bed, nor encroach on his Property. These Negatives will never unlock Heaven's Gate, nor place you in Bliss. Faith must carry a Torch before you, otherwise you'll ramble in the Dark, and wander in Error, till the Flames of Hell display the Mistake, and at the same time punish it.

But do you think, *Neander*, that those Men, who talk down Religion, and cry up Morals, are at the Bottom greater Friends to the one, than to the other? Alas! no; their Actions are as Libertine as their Belief; and if we may judge by Appearance, they have no more of the Man, than of the Christian. For whoever saw these mighty Advocates of Morals, these Assertors of Regularity, ever stand up in Defence of Virtue, but when they actually condemn'd it in Practice? I have often indeed heard your qualified Debauchees talk most feelingly of Sobriety over *Champaigne*, of Temperance at a full Table: And I once met with a Prostitute, that extolled Chastity like a *Vestal*. You must therefore, when you meet with Infidel Moralists, suppose they only commend Vertue in Jest, but practise Vice in good Earnest; and that they are as far from enslaving their Passions to the Laws of Nature, as their Judgments to Divine Revelation.

Take not Religion upon Credit; there are in the World Teachers of false Tenets, as well as Coiners of false Crowns; and as you bring these to the Touch-Stone, so you must bring those. To believe, you know not why, is rather Stupidity than Faith; it's to unfence Religion, to lay it open to the weakest Assault of Schism and Heresy. In fine, to believe nothing is Madness, and to believe any thing Folly. He is truly happy who walks between these two Extreams, and neither believes too much nor too little.

X.

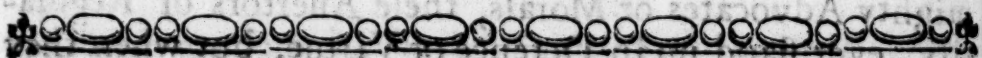
The Religion you must embrace, is that which Christ revealed, and his Apostles preach'd: This may be denied

nied by a *Jew* or *Turk*, but not by a Christian. For, being God, he had Authority to command, and we have an indispensable Obligation to obey; nor could he set up Impostures for Truths, or impose Falsehood under the Mask of Divine Revelation. The Apostles indeed were Men, but inspired from Heaven, and consequently no more subject to Error, than the Divine Spirit that gave his Oracles through the Organs of their Mouths.

This is a Summary of your Duty to God: That you owe your Neighbour shall be the Subject of our next Entertainment. In the mean time you must be my Guest to Day, pray refuse me not the Favour.

Nean. I am at your Command; but let me desire you to give me these excellent Documents in Writing; they are too long to be remember'd, and too useful to be forgot.

Euseb. I'll comply with your Desires, and at my Leisure set down what I can call to Memory.



DIALOGUE IV.

Whether Gentlemen are obliged to practise Vertue.

“SCARCE was Dinner ended, but in came *Eleutherius*,
 “an Acquaintance of *Eusebius*; he was a Gentleman
 “of a worthy Family, and of an Estate suitable to
 “his Character. Liberty and Pleasure were his darling
 “Passions; and I have heard him say, he had rather
 “want Grace than Wit, although he had no great Pro-
 “vision of either. He could not endure to be crowded
 “with Visits, or yoked in Ceremony, because such
 “Formalities entrench’d on Freedom, and put Liberty
 “under Constraint; and for this reason he never went to
 “Court: For he compared Courtiers to so many Slaves,
 “who move in Fetters, and live for others, not for them-
 “selves; sometimes to work’d-down Labourers, more fit
 “for Sleep than Pleasure. In fine, he valued Ease above
 “Greatness, and Sensuality above Conscience, so that his
 “Name jumpt with his Humour; his Religion was of
 “the last Edition, that is, *Puritanism* cut on *Independency*,
 “and garnish’d with an *Oleo* of upstart Noveltries; he
 “ascribed

ascribed Man's Justification to Faith alone, and therefore condemn'd good Works as *Heterodox*, as Encroachments upon Christian Liberty, and Grievance to the Subject: Hence he hated Humiliation-Days, and could never be persuaded to fast till he had regaled his Appetite. One Day he moved that the Statute *de comburendo Heretico* might be revived, and executed upon a Person for saying that *estote perfecti* was addressed to Gentlemen; he look'd upon it as a scandalum magnatum, and a clipping of the Privilege of Peerage. In fine, he was of Opinion, that Fancy was the only Rule of a Gentleman's Faith, and Pleasure that of his Actions.

Euseb. Welcome, *Eleutherius*, pray sit down. Why so thoughtful and recollected? I suppose you are come from your Devotions, Morning-Service is just done.

Eleuthe. Why, Man, this is not the Lord's-Day.

Euseb. Pray of what Religion are you?

Eleuthe. I am a Christian.

Euseb. Ah, that may be, but of what Persuasion? For that Notion reaches a great Way: There are *Christian Papists*, *Christian Turks*, and *Christian Infidels*; and then there are *Protestants*, and *True Protestants*, and in fine there are *Ec cetera Christians*, with which of these do you convene?

Eleuthe. With all, and with neither; that is, I have drawn off the Spirits from each, and left the *Caput mortuum* behind; in short, my Religion is new and modish: 'Tis grinned at indeed by some, but practised by the greater and more witty Part of the Nobility, 'tis Reformation upon Reformation.

Euseb. Metel upon a Metel is a Solecism in Heraldry, and why not Reformation upon Reformation in Religion? But under Favour, if general Practice hits right with the Precepts of your Religion, they are Fly-blown; and were I disposed to dogmatize, I would only gloss upon that Text. Follow my Counsel, *Eleutherius*; say common Practice clashes with its Maxims, or else you'll give too great an Advantage to Criticism and Enquiry. For if what you say be true, your Religion is without Fence, without Rampart, and a little Reason will batter the whole Fabrick about your Ears; for when the Question is about Good and Evil, Practice stands on the wrong side.

But,

But, Sir, let us wave Dispute; supposing you are a Christian, what Harm is there in going to Church on a *Feria*?

Eleuthe. What Harm is it to sink my Character, and fling up my *Charter*?

Euseb. Why, Praying and good Works come not within the Statute of Treason, I hope.

Eleuthe. Take care, you may slip into a *Præmunire* before you are aware. Liberty and Property are edged Tools now-a-days, few have meddled with them without a *Scar*.

Euseb. You are in a very merry Vein to Day, but methinks the Subject bears no Raillery. Prithee (*Drollery* apart) what do you mean by *Liberty*, *Property*, and *Præmunire*?

Eleuthe. In short then, Gentlemen are not tied up to Works of *Supererogation*, to Virtue, Perfection, and twenty other Niceties; all the World knows that Christians are Free-born Subjects, exempt from the Bondage of Precept and Ceremony. They date their Liberty from the Moment of their Baptism; and a learn'd Clerk, let me tell you, was of Opinion, that the very Ten Commandments expired with the Synagogue. Now, Sir, to bring Gentlemen upon their Knees to incumber their Liberty with Laws and Statutes, is to touch them in the most sensible Part. *Englishmen* will stand for their Birth-right, and not give up tamely so considerable a Privilege; and if you strive to wrest it out of their Hand, you may perchance repent of the Attempt. You will have to do with Numbers and Power: and though Truth stands for you, if Force sides against you, the Field will be lost.

Euseb. This is Liberty indeed with a Vengeance. Nature at this rate, and Sensuality, are let loose, and have a large Field to walk in. Because Christ came into the World to banish Sin, Man may open the Gate to all Abominations; he may break through all the Barriers of Nature, Reason, and Religion; he may cozen and murder not only with Impunity, but also with Devotion. I would have you draw up a Petition against Goals, Pillories, and Execution; nay, it would not be amiss at your next *Coffee-House* Assembly, to vote down Hell also as a Grievance to the Free-born Subjects of the *Covenant*.

Eleuthe.

Eleuthe. Nay, indeed the Parson strain'd the Point, he has overshot the Truth and himself too; but I'll maintain at least that Gentlemen are not bound up to what Divines call *Vertue* and *Perfection*; these Fooleries look well enough in a Canonical Cassock, or a Clergy-man's Dress, but in Scarlet and Gold Lace, they make a lean Figure, they walk in Embroidery, as little *David* did in *Saul's* Armour, very awkwardly, and rather furnish Matter for Diversion, than for Edification.

Euseb. Though this *Thesis* has less of Scandal than the former, I am sure 'tis equally false. For tell me, have not our Gentlemen and topping Mortals received from the liberal Hands of God, a far greater Allowance of Favour, than Vulgars?

Eleuthe. No doubt of it; Nobility it self is a Favour of the first Class; it raises a Man above the Crowd and Smoak of the World, it entitles him to Honour and Respect; the Prince moves here below, as the Sun does above in Glory and Magnificence; Gentlemen are Stars placed above him for Pomp, State, and Ornament; besides, Gentlemen's Bodies have a finer Texture of Parts, than those of a meaner Condition; their Complexion is more bright and sprightly; their Air more polite; in fine, Nature is like Carvers, who flubber over those Pieces that are condemn'd to Obscurity, and polish those with the last Exactness that stand in View.

Euseb. You argue right for me; but then you confute your own *Thesis*. For if Gentlemen have received more Favours than the Peasant, certainly they are oblig'd in Honour, as well as Duty, to make a more ample Return of Gratitude. For, suppose a Prince has raised one from the Degree of a Page, to that of a Lord or Captain of his Guards, that he has at the same time flung in 12000 *l. per Ann.* to support the Title, and set off his Dignity; has not this new dated *Peer* a more strait Obligation to serve his Royal Benefactor, than a *Dray-man*, that only enjoys the common Protection of the Government? This is our Case to a Hair. You grant on the one Hand, that such a Man lies not only under the common and fundamental Duties of a Subject, but also under the additional Ties of Gratitude to serve his Prince; and on the other you confess, that God has with greater Profuseness pour'd out his Liberality on Gentlemen, than

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on Clowns and Tradesmen ; why then is not their Obligation greater to serve him ?

Eleuth. Their very Station and Rank, is their Patent of Exemption ; in short, they have no time : For you must allow a Gentleman ten Hours for Sleep, a Quarter for his private Affairs ; two Hours to saunter from the Stable to the Dog-kennel ; three for Dinner, and as many for Supper ; almost Six for the Tavern, Coffee-house, and Theatre ; so that you may see here remains no time for God and Vertue.

Enseb. Your *Arithmetick* over-balances your Christianity. Is it not ridiculous (I mean impious) to take the length of a Man's Duty by his Practice, to argue from *Fact* to *Right*, and Subpæne Transgression to witness for the Breach of a Precept ? You have carv'd out a Gentleman's Time exactly enough, but not justly ; and I doubt much whether he will stand to it in the next World, tho' he may perchance in this. God bids 'em watch and pray in the Gospel ; and St. *Paul* in his Epistle recommends Sobriety and Chastity. Now I think Men seldom watch or pray while they sleep, and as seldom learn Sobriety in Taverns, or Chastity in Brothels, or Morality in profligate Conversation ; tell me then not what Gentlemen do, but what they should do, which in short is this : As they have but one Affair to manage, which is their Salvation, so all their Thoughts and Actions must look that way ; if any Motion warps from this *Center*, they swerve from their Duty ; they must baulk Appetite, not gratify it ; and either stifle Passions or fetter them ; they must be humble in Prosperity, and great in Adversity, (*i. e.*) they must bear that with Moderation, this without Clamours or Impatience ; they must rather forfeit their Lives than Conscience, and postpone Pleasure to their Duty. These are the Offices of Gentlemen : For Men were plac'd in this World to cultivate Vertue, and to enjoy the Fruit of it hereafter ; though they labour and sweat from the *Cradle* to the *Coffin*, to advance their temporal Concerns, they forward their Misery, and interrupt their Happiness ; they are Strangers to themselves, and only Guests in their own House ; they drudge continually, yet do nothing, and are laboriously Idle. Tell me not then of *Sleep*, *Visits*, *Horses*, *Hounds*, *Taverns*, and *Play-Houses* ; these Things, with some grains of Allowance, may be permitted

mitted Gentlemen as Amusements and Diversions, but not as Business; their Business, their Grand Concern, and their only Concern, is God's Service, and their Salvation; and if they squander the precious Moments of Time he has afforded them, they abuse the Gift and the very End of their Creation.

Eleuthe. You are warm, methinks, and press very hard on Quality; but I suppose you are only in the Vein of Bantering, and intend to shew how well you can manage an ill Cause, and that Wit and Declamation can sometimes supply the place of Reason and Argument; thou art excellently qualified for the Pulpit; thou hast Words and Invektive at Command; prithee off with thy *Jump*, and on with a *Cassock*; thou wilt run down Vice at an unmerciful Rate, and talk Debauchery out of Countenance; no Sin will stand thee, no Heresy affront thee; but, by the bye, *Ensebins*, you are subject to slip as well as your Neighbours; and sometimes your Passion runs so fast, that it distances your Reason: For I think you grant that the bare Observation of God's Commandments will carry a Man to Heaven, what then have we to do with our Works of Supererogation, Mortification, and Austerities? The very Word implies Counsel only, not a Precept, and by Consequence no Obligation.

Enseb. I grant what you desire, but then I must add, that without these Works of Supererogation, as you call 'em, you'll never keep those Commandments. You can't hit a Mark unless you level higher. Gravity sinks the Arrow under the first Line of Direction, in spite of the Impulse. This is our Case, Nature draws towards the Center, no less than Weight; 'tis wanton and libertine, and loves to range in the Latitude of sensual Pleasure, not within the Compass of Law and Regularity. Now if you loose the Rein, and give it the whole Line of Duty to play in, 'twill break through that Restraint, and carry you beyond it. For let me tell you, Appetite is not caressed into Duty, but beaten into it, and Passions are not to be tam'd by Condescendence. Like the Mobile, the more Liberty you give 'em, the more they ask; they must be dieted and brought low, otherwise they'll fly in your Face. In fine, if you will not give 'em ask what is unjust, refuse 'em what is lawful; besides, Indulgence arms 'em, it gives 'em a Prospect of their

their own Power and your Weakness ; and then if each single one be a Match for a *Gyant*, who can resist the whole Band drawn up in a Body ? You boggle at great Sins, but swallow little ones without Scruple or Remorse ; you shut your Ears against the inward Calls of God's Grace, and struggle with his Inspirations. All these things are petty Quarrels with your Maker ; they are Contempts and Disrespects, though not Treasons. In fine, they are Sins. Now, whosoever dare look a little Sin in the Face without Horrour, will soon commit great ones with Pleasure ; for they are both really Sins, and must be repented of ; the Difference lies only in the Greatness on the one side, and in the Littleness on the other. When *Marius* was sent against the *Cambri*, his Soldiers durst not look the Enemy in the Face ; their Gygantick Stature and barbarous Aspect cow'd the *Roman* Bravery : But when they had beheld these barbarous *Germans* three Days from the Camp, their Spirits reviv'd, and their congealed Courage began to circulate through every Vein ; they not only fought 'em, but overcame. Just so a Man educated in the Principles of Christianity, cannot think of the Breach of a Commandment without Trembling, without Convulsions ; but then he slides into trivial Commissions : At first, a Damp arises over his Stomach, he is crop-sick, uneasy, he continues on his Course, and Conscience begins to slumber ; its Reproaches are faint, its Strings scarce perceptible ; Custom flings in a Dose of *Opium*, and then it falls into a Lethargy ; and when Man is once arrived at this Pitch of Insensibility, he boggles at no Impiety ; he breaks through God's Commands, and will soon storm Hell to satisfy Passion. From whence comes this, but from your Principle, *The Gentlemen are not tied up to Vertue, Patience, Humility*. For did such Gentlemen mortify Appetite, and crush Sensuality in the Cradle ; did they place all their Satisfaction in an absolute Obedience to their Maker's Will, and never allow Nature and Senses any Play-days, they would not have broke open the Inclosures of Duty, nor left all in common to Licentiousness ; they had never made their Inclinations their Law, nor Pleasures the sole Boundaries of their Actions : For that Aphorism is most true, *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*, no Body jumps into ill on the sudden ; Negligence and Distrust weaken God's

Commands, before we venture to break 'em. Now supposing all Men are oblig'd to Vertue, it naturally follows, that this Obligation lies harder on Gentlemen.

First, They lie more in the reach of Temptation, than People of an inferiour Rank; more in view of the Enemy; their Circumstances then require Vigilance; they must stand Centinel, and place Out-Guards for fear of a Surprize. A poor Man that can scarce furnish Necessaries for Life, has neither the Means nor Thought to pamper Luxury; Nature is work'd down, and rather cries out for Rest than Pleasure. In short, he can scarce Live, much less Riot; Pride can't come at him, it must pass through Muck, Smoak, and Penury to reach him. Now this Vice is too high stomach'd to stoop so low, it loves not to lie on a Dunghil, or sleep on Straw; and a Man that daily sees and feels nothing but Want and Misery, must be mad before he can be proud, or grow vain upon any fond Presumption: Besides, Appetite is so kept under by Necessity, that it can scarce crawl; its very Desires reach no higher than Bread to subdue Hunger; and Cloaths to fence off Cold, and veil Nakedness. No ill Object passes through the poor Man's Eyes into the Heart; they draw in no Species, but those of Beasts and Dunghils; so that whatever they behold is either rebating or innocent. In fine, they are below Temptation; and like a small dismantled Village, not worth seizing. But Gentlemen stand the Mark of every Temptation, the *World*, the *Flesh*, and the *Devil*, seem to have enter'd a tripple League against them; they are mark'd out for a Slaughter and Sacrifice, they live in the midst of Plague and Infection, and can't take one Step without meeting Danger, nor breath without taking in Contagion; the World fawns on them; Passions revolt, and the Devil casts Nets to ensnare them; fine Sights debauch the Eyes, Musick the Ears, *Ragon's* the Taste, Perfumes the Smell, and false Principles the Understanding; Wine heats the Passions, and Delicacies put them in a Ferment; so that a Gentleman is beset on all sides; each Vice batters his Constancy, and assaults his Innocence. Now, what way can he come off with Victory? He must raise Counter-Batteries, and dismount those Engines that play upon him; he must make a Sally, and face Pride with Humility, Luxury with Continency,

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Intemperance with Sobriety, and Love of Pleasure with that of Duty: In Morals as well as Physick Contraries alone defeat Contraries. Does not Nature tell us, as well as Experience, that when the Attack is brisk and vigorous, the Place will infallibly be taken, unless the Defendant beat off Force with Force, and tire out the Assailants with Resolution.

Secondly, The Faults of the baser sort of Mankind are *Personal*. They never spread; like an *Apoplexy* they strike but one; the Mischief ends where it begun, and one Life satisfies its Fury. But Gentlemen's Crimes become universal, like the Plague, they sweep away whole Families, and drive Mortality and Desolation before 'em. For the vulgar are an apish Generation, they live on Imitation, and are carried away by the Example of Great ones, as the inferior Orbs by the Motion of the superior; so that if a Master throws his Vices among the Family they are soon pick'd up, and wore as Robes of Honour. For Servants that know their Fortune depends on a Master's Smile, will not easily displease him. They eye every Motion; study his Humour, and strike in with his Inclination: They applaud his Extravagancies first, and then adopt them by Practice. And thus by this abominable Complaisance, Slaves oftentimes work themselves into their Master's Favours, and not seldom into their Estates and Dignities. And then when Vice is so extravagantly rewarded, both with Estate and Pleasure, when a Man can debauch himself into a competent Fortune, without other Charges or Expence, than that of Conscience, 'tis odds he'll venture on the Enterprize. Besides, Sins supported with *Escutcheon*, and Title pass for Grandeur: Nay, and Vice at the Head of a pompous Retinue is often mistaken for Vertue. For the Vulgar judge by the Eyes, not by Reason; and whatever appears *great*, they conclude *good*, as if Glittering and Value were Synonymous. Who has spread this Illusion through the whole Mass of these Morals, but the Nobility? Gentlemen therefore, besides the direct Obligation of Obedience they owe to God, they lie under a collateral one of Charity towards their Neighbours, and by consequence, their Failings carry Scandal along with 'em, as well as Disobedience; so that every Crime they commit may be call'd *Legion*.

Eleuth.

Eleuthe. 'Tis time to take a little Breath, you'll overheat your Lungs; and discompose your *Fabrick*. But pray, Sir, under favour, are Master *Gaolers ex officio*? or must they be Bail for their Servants good Behaviour?

Euseb. No, but then they must not be their Murderers.

Eleuthe. Why, I suppose you don't intend to cast scandalous Reflections upon the whole Progeny of Masters? Have a care, they may bring an Action of Calumny against you; 'tis dangerous for a single Man to engage with Numbers.

Euseb. Let us not dispute of the Name, I say you stab Souls; if this be not Murder, 'tis something worse; and if our Laws take no Cognizance of it, Gods does.

Eleuthe. What, Masters must play the Chaplains to their Family, as *N. N.* did; they must on with the *Surplice* and *Tipper*, and preach to the Text of *Fifthly, Beloved, is it so? Is our Brother gone astray? Yea verily to Perdition.*

Euseb. Laughing and Drollery, are great Reliefs at a *non-plus*. I have often seen some in Conversation, when their Stock of Reason was laid out, extream lavish of such Impertinencies. Leave the Pulpit to the *Parson*, but preach within your own Walls; at least by Example: This is more persuasive than Words; 'tis within your Sphere, within the Liberties of your Office and Obligation too; or at least throwd your own Abominations under a Cover; let them not take Air, they'll sit more easy on your Conscience, and not entangle others; if you'll not couple together the Office of Chaplain and Master, don't that of *Gentleman* and *Devil*.

Eleuthe. I perceive by your Discourse, that Gentlemen will not gain your good Will, unless they put on Fetters, and see their Keepers. Slavery is not so valuable a Blessing, as to be purchas'd. People often buy Liberty, but seldom Chains. I must stand forsooth upon Reservedness and Ceremony with my Lacquey or Groom, put a Restraint upon my Freedom, mure up my Mouth, and stifle mirth, or else cry out, *Jack, under Favour!* Or pray be not scandaliz'd! Is not this to put *Jack* in the Coach, and perch my *Lord* behind it? to place *Tom* in the Parlour, and bind over *Right Worshipful* to the Kitchen? In short, Speculation and Theory may approve your Morals, Practice cannot. We hire Mens Service, not their Devotion.

Euseb. Very well, according to your Casuistry, Precedents vie the Standard of Right, and then in the same Figure and Mode it follows plain enough, that because Men damn themselves, they do it justly, and we are eternally miserable by Law. The Consequence is Logical enough, but not too Christian. However, if Hell have such wonderful Charms, run into its Embraces: But remember there is no return; and look before you jump, else you may condemn your Folly, but not amend it. Quick Resolutions are soon repented.

Eleutherius arose in a Heat, and walked about the Room, his Pulse beat high, and one might read the Trouble of his Mind on his Cheeks.

Eleuthe. I love not those severe Morals, they cow the Spirits, disjoint Conversation, and clog Freedom. Spleen begot 'em, Melancholly nurs'd 'em, and Envy recommended them to the Pulpit. For I find those Men are the great Companions of Vertue, that are not able to be vicious; and those declaim most against Pleasure that are past enjoying it. Yet these false Devotees will needs impose on Gentlemen, and set their Impotence as a Law for others.

Euseb. Look ye, there is no harm done; you are still Master of your Practice, though neither of us can command Principles; these come not within the Precinct of your Liberty; are neither subject to Change or Alteration; *Semper idem*, is their Motto. In a Word, Sir, I mould not my Discourse to an Humorist's Inclination, but to the Rules of Truth. Judgment and Conviction move my Tongue, not Adulation. If I have imposed on you, unmask the Imposture; if not, let good Humour run in its ordinary Channel. To strike in with a Patient's Disease, is not Kindness but Cruelty; and I believe you had rather be eased of a Distemper with *Coloquintida*, than to be sent into the next World with *Fuleps*.

Eleuthe. It's true, but I would not be debarred of Elbow Room, not willingly sit in the Stocks, or be awed by a Groom or a Foot-Boy. I would not bid Defiance to Conscience, nor War upon the Almighty. I am willing to condescend to an Agreement upon Honourable Conditions.

Euseb. What? Will you stand upon Terms with your Maker! and Article with your Creator? *id est*, you'll vouchsafe

vouchsafe to be his Servant, provided he takes off all Restraint from Nature, and give you leave to live at Discretion? Fye, fye, *Eleutherius*, you are too weak to grapple with the Omnipotent, when he commands you must obey.

Eleuthe. Right, when he commands; the Question is not *de jure*, but *de facto*, not whether he can command these Trifles you spoke of, but whether he has commanded 'em. For in short, we bawl upon the Topick of Vertue and Vice, and yet we scarce know what we would be at. For what one Country approves another condemns; and what deserves the Halter under one *Elevation* merits a *Patent* under another. The *Lacedemonians*, rank'd subtil Thefts among the Vertues, and punish'd your clumsy Lurchers; as if the Sin consisted in the Discovery alone. In other Places it's an Act of Piety to feed heartily on a deceased Relation, and an unpardonable Crime to deliver a Father over to the Mercy of Worms.

Euseb. What do you mean?

Eleuthe. I mean, that Good and Evil, Right and Wrong, Vertue and Vice, lie much in Fancy and Education; that Policy and Custom coin these different Notions. Why else is the same thing Good under one Meridian, and Evil under another? Popery in *Italy*, *France* and *Spain* is voted Orthodox; in *England* Heterodox. Beyond Seas Fasting and Celibacy are meritorious, in *England* Celibacy is Superstitious, Vain and Hypocritical. So that in Conclusion, Good and Bad vary with the Climate, and by Consequence take their *Being* from Imagination, Interest, or civil Authority, unless you'll say that all Mens Reason is not of the same Species.

Euseb. No doubt, you have harangued excellently on the Text of Libertinism; why don't you confound all Religions, as well as all Actions?

Nean. I believe he does: For if Vertue and Vice differ only in Name, Faith and Infidelity may easily be reconciled, and then *Mahometism* may be put in as good Pretensions to Revelation as Christianity.

Euseb. Prithce *Eleutherius*, talk no more of Faith, of Church, of Religion; thy Breath smells rank enough to fly-blow Truth, and to taint the Gospel.

Eleuthe. Adieu; my Business calls upon me. Pray let our next Conversation be more palatable.

Euseb. By all means; we'll talk of *Wine, Women, and Venison Pasties*; these are palatable Topicks for Epicures and Scavengers, but not for Gentlemen and Christians.

Eleuthe. Gentlemen, your humble Servant.

Euseb. You see, *Neander*, *Eleutherius's* universal Practice, drawn up in short; can Blindness, Stupidity and Madness soar higher? Like crowned Victims these unhappy Creatures dance and sing under the fatal Stroke without Concern, without Sense of the Danger! They laugh and droll one Moment, and begin the next to weep eternally. Oh Frenzy! They Post in full Speed in the broad Way to Perdition, and will needs be told they spur to Heaven! What Notions have these Men of the other World, who live so madly in this! Surely they fancy the Soul flashes into nothing, when the Body falls into Dust, and that they die like Beasts, they live so like 'em. Yet these are your well bred Gentlemen, your Men of Parts and Merit: And indeed one must have extraordinary Breeding to compliment our selves into Hell; one must be witty to Madness, and prudent to Folly, to contrive our eternal Misery so efficaciously. But seeing they will not profit by our Instructions, let us, *Neander*, by their Stupidity: We'll leave them to themselves; their Vices can't damn us; both Glory and Punishment are personal; we have made a Day's Work of it; to morrow we'll prosecute the same Subject.



DIALOGUE V.

A Prosecution on the same Subject.

“ *Eleutherius* at his Return to his Lodging, grew un-
 “ easy and sullen; the late Discourse had alarm'd
 “ his Fears, and awak'd his Conscience, which began in
 “ good Earnest to call him to an Account, and flung be-
 “ fore him an ungrateful *Journal* of his Vices. The un-
 “ happy Gentleman was acquainted with such Re-
 “ proaches, he scarce understood the Language, and
 “ found in himself no Inclination to learn it. He thought
 “ he had treated Conscience so ill, it would not have the
 “ Confidence to return; and indeed for several Years he
 “ heard no News of it; which made him suspect it was
 “ deceased,

deceased, or had taken a Turn to the *Indies* for Diversion.

So that he knew not what to make of these unusual Gripes, of these Aches of the Stomach. At first he suspected *Eusebius* had Intelligence with Satan; and cried out for a *Divine* and *Exorcism*. For why (said he) can't Potions conjure up from Hell the Devil of Fear, as well as *Philtrums* raise the Fury of Love? But he soon confessed, the Devil's Business was to deaden Remorse, not to quicken it; to gag Conscience, not to provoke it into Clamours and Reproaches.

Though *Eusebius* had argued down the Gentleman's Understanding, he made no Impression upon his Will; though this Faculty be really blind, it affects Command, and seldom fails to usurp the Government entail'd on Reason, whenever it's seconded by the Rebellious Mobile of unruly Passions. Hence it comes that our Judgment generally strikes in with our Inclination, and seldom pronounces against our Interest and Pleasure.

Eleutherius had been train'd up in the wild Principles of Libertinism; and having tasted the Sweetness of an uncontrouled Liberty, he found in himself no Propension to enslave his Reason to the Rules of Revelation, nor his Practice, to the Laws of Morality; wherefore he brib'd his Will to over-reach his Reason, and very eagerly helpt on the *Imposture*. His Endeavour proved successful; for in Spight of Conviction he questioned the Arguments of *Eusebius*, and laid his late Defeat on the Weakness of his own Abilities, not on the Force of his Adversaries Reasons: and now his Conscience began to speak in a lower Tone; it upbraided him with a fainter Accent, and a kind of Respect; nor did he doubt but a second Conference would send it again beyond Sea; but he would not leave the Cause to his own Management, but pitch upon his Friends, a *Barister* and a *Courtier*, whom he supposed to be mighty Wits, because they laugh at Piety to Scandal. The Design was laid handsomely, and had a promising Aspect; for though the Lawyer managed his ill Tongue, the other was excellent at his Weapon, and so might push on the Cause with a steel Point, as well as with a brazen Forehead.

“ *Eleutherius* next Morning desired *Eusebius* to favour
 “ him with a Visit in the Evening; he promised to meet
 “ him at his House, and put off *Neander* till the next
 “ Day. He went at the time appointed, but found
 “ only *Eleutherius*’s Lady at home. She received *Euse-*
 “ *bium* with Civility, and desired him to expect her
 “ Husband’s Return.

“ She was a *Lady* of the Town, an Admirer of Ease,
 “ and a Mortal Enemy to Constraint. One Part of the
 “ Morning she lay in her Bed, the other she sat at her
 “ *Toilet*. She spent the Evening either in receiving Vi-
 “ sits, or returning ’em. Her Wit run before her Judg-
 “ ment, but her Tongue distanc’d both. In fine, her
 “ Thoughts soared not an Inch above Earth. She was
 “ wedded to the World, enchanted with the present,
 “ and unmindful of the future.

“ After some usual Civilities, Pray, Sir, (said she)
 “ give me leave to enquire what pass’d between my
 “ Husband and you Yesterday, he return’d in Disorder;
 “ I hope there was no Blood drawn.

Euseb. None: My Duelling-Days, Madam, are past,
 my Sword has slept some Years in the Scabbard, and no-
 thing but an extraordinary Occasion shall release it from
 that Confinement.

Lady. Perchance, you bled his Pocket; *Bleeding* is
 sensible to some Constitutions in that Vein; and I have
 seen Persons who would let out seven Ounces of Blood
 with fewer Grimaces, than one of Silver. And indeed
Eleutherius is of this Humour, his Money and Patience
 go together.

Euseb. We past the Afternoon in Discourse, not in
 Play, and I suppose he took Pet because we could not
 agree upon the Point in Question.

Lady. You surprize me, Sir; he and I play at *Gross*
Questions every Day; nay, we seldom are of the same
 Opinion: Yet you would take him for a *Dove* without
 Gall, without Passion, yea, without Sense, he bears my
 Humour so tamely: Certainly you discuss’d a Matter of
 Importance, to talk him into such an extraordinary Dis-
 temper. May I be so rude, as to ask you the Subject of
 your Conversation?

Euseb. Madam, the Subject was, Whether the Gentry
 be not obliged to practice Christian Vertues; and whether
 this

this Precept, *be perfect*, falls not as heavy on *Lords*, and *Ladies*, as on *Valcts de Chambres* and *Waiting Women*? *Eleutherius* maintained the Non-obligation, and treated me with Heat and Passion, because I would not give up the Gospel to espouse his Error.

Lady, Indeed, Sir, I do not enter into Men's Concerns, but I am of Opinion, that Precept reaches not our Sex. Our Constitution is *delicate*, *soft* and *unattempting*, more fit for *Ease* than *Labour*, and more inclinable to Pleasure than Pain. Besides, Liberty is our Favourite, and Constraint our mortal Enemy. The very Name of a Precept chills our Blood, and the Obligation of a Command is an invinsible Temptation to transgress it. God therefore seeing our Nature unapt for Burden, cannot surely overcharge it with Prohibitions or Commands.

Enseb. But I suppose, Madam, you have some Pretensions for Heaven; you hope to enjoy God in the next World, as well as his Creatures in this.

Lady. I'll endeavour to be happy here, and hope to be so hereafter. Surely, Sir, you don't take me for a *Japonefe*, without Soul, without Expectation of a future State?

Enseb. No, Madam; but of too much Liberty of Principle and Education too. But pray, how will you find God, unless you seek him? And how will you be received into Heaven at your Death, unless you prepare the Way to it by Vertue in your Life?

Our Saviour was pleased to assure Mankind, that the Way to Heaven is *narrow* and *uneven*: Perchance your Ladyship has fallen upon a more convenient Road, and intend to ride thither in a Coach and Six.

Lady. I seek his Will in the Bible, and his Presence in the Church,

Enseb. But do you also in your Actions? Alas, Madam, the Knowledge of God's Commands will not save you; and I suppose many mourn in Hell, who sometimes visited the Church on a *Sunday*. You know, Madam, the greatest part of human Actions are of themselves indifferent, and take their Value from the Intention: They must be directed to God's Honour, to benefit our Souls; and tend to his Glory, to forward our Salvation. May I be so bold, as to entreat your Ladyship to favour me with a brief Account of the Method you use in the Oblation of your Actions?

Lady.

Lady. Sir, I have not yet resolved on a Confessor; I own no such Obligation; and I am not disposed to Works of Supererogation; and therefore you must not expect to sound my Conscience, or to read my Thoughts.

Enseb. I confess, I am not quite furnish'd for the Employment of *Direction*, and I had rather be condemn'd to the driving of *Lyons*, than to be leading of *Beata's*. But however seeing you are pleased to refuse me the Favour I demanded, you will let me try, at least, if I can hit on your Method.

" Omnipotent Eternal God! for thy sake I intend to
 " devote every Action of this Day to the World, with-
 " out leaving one Thought for Heaven. My only Care
 " shall be to have none, and my only Study to avoid So-
 " licitude. I'll glitter in Silks and Silver, and hang
 " Lordships in my Ears; tho' my Sons become *Laqueys*,
 " my Daughters *Chamber-maids*, and my Husband fasts
 " out my Bravery in the *King's-Bench*, or the *Marshalsea*.
 " I'll want nothing at Table but Appetite, and rather
 " run upon Tick, than keep within the Bounds of Fru-
 " gality or Decency. After Dinner I'll either give or re-
 " turn Visits, and entertain the Company at the Expence
 " of Modesty and Charity. And in the Evening I'll
 " drive to *Hide-Park*, and from thence strike off to a
 " *Ball* or a *Comedy*. I'll please those Gallants who please
 " me; and smile on those who extol my rare Perfecti-
 " ons. All this, O God! I offer up, &c.

In good Earnest, Madam, dare you banter the *Most High* at this monstrous Rate? Would not such an Offering (like that of *Cain*) draw down a Curse instead of a Blessing? What! do we seek God by trampling upon his Commands, and merit Heaven by deserving Hell! Or is not this a faithful Copy of your Practice? Is it not your Study, your Business, your only Employment to invent new Pleasures, and then to enjoy 'em? Now, Madam, if you dare not offer up your Actions to God, with what Face can you expect a Reward! Will he recompence Vice, and crown Impiety? Or have I misrepresented your Conduct? Don't you rave after Pleasure, Vanity, and Gallantry.

Lady. What then?

Enseb. St. Paul is very positive, *That a Woman that liveth in Pleasure, is dead while she liveth*: She lives in Appearance,

ance, but is dead in Effect; she has indeed the Life of Sense, but not that of Grace, and by consequence will never enjoy that of Glory.

Lady. Pray, Sir, can't a Woman wear fine Apparel without forfeiting her Robe of Innocence? must she rise from a full Table to suffer eternal Hunger? Must she be convey'd from the Play-House into a Place of Torments? Can't we be happy in the next World, unless we lie continually stretcht on Racks and Tortures in this.

Ensch. Our Blessed Saviour, Madam, shall be heard, if you please, upon this Point. *Woe be to the Rich, to those that feast, to those that laugh.* You have, Madam, a plentiful Estate, you regale your Appetite, you laugh sometimes at your Neighbour's Verrues, and as often at the Expence of his Reputation: Do not therefore our Saviour's Maledictions concern your Ladyship? And will he receive you in the next World with an *Engel*, who strikes you with a tripple *Vae* in this?

Lady. You misapply Scripture, to forge an Argument, and play the declaiming Pedant: Is it a Sin to visit the Play House, to dance at a Ball, to have a comfortable Estate, a well furnish'd Table, and upon Occasion to smile?

Ensch. I answer first, though these Actions taken in Retail are not criminal, yet taken in a Lump they can't be innocent. For is it lawful, do you think, to consecrate all the Moments of your Life to Ease and Pleasure, to caress Passion, and court Sensuality, to make Satisfaction the Principle and End of all your Desires and Endeavours, and not to give Vertue the very Place of an Accessory? What mean those Precepts of *Self-denial*, of *suffering*, of *mortifying the Sallies of the Flesh*? Do they stand for *Cypers* in the Gospel, or were they made merely to transgress? Did the Son of God espouse our Nature with all its Infirmities? Did he suffer Hunger, Persecution, Whips, and Death, to purchase us Grace, to be drawn from *Hide-Park* to the *Theatre*, from thence to *Balls* and *Feasts*? Did we come into the World to dance *Minuets* and *Ricadones*? to sing *Airs* either amorous or uncharitable?

Secondly, To see a Play that is either innocent or instructive, is no Sin. But then to see five hundred Plays, that from the *Prologue* to the *Epilogue*, are either stult with

with Blasphemy, or larded with Atheism, or embroidered with Smut and Ribaldry, is a Sin. Can a Christian with a safe Conscience take Pleasure in hearing the Name of his Redeemer reviled, in seeing every part of his crucified Saviour recrucified in horrid Oaths? Does a Spectator of this second Crucifixion bear him more Reverence, than those of his first? Can you see without a Crime, Vertue brought every Evening to the Scaffold either as a Criminal or a *Harlequin* to be punish'd or hooted at; and Vice tread the Stage, first with Pomp, and then go off with Reward? Is it not a Sin to countenance one? And who countenances those Scenes of Libertinism but those who pay the Players and applaud the Poet.

I do not say it's a Crime precisely to dance sometimes at a *Ball*, to sing an *Aire à la mode*, to enjoy a fair Estate, to sit at a full Table, or to wear a gaudy *Mantua*, if you clear Accounts with Merchants and Taylors. But, Madam, these Amusements are waited on by so violent, so provoking Temptations, that a Lady smitten (to Transport and Dotage with these Vanities) will certainly fall into many crying Offences, and by consequence draw down upon her sinful Head both the Maledictions and Vengeance of our blessed Saviour.

For alas! if the most watchful are sometimes surprized, are not those in Danger who sleep in the very Camp of their Enemies? If those Christians can scarce overcome the Allurements of Vice, who confine themselves to Retirement and Solitude; who check Appetite, who baulk Passion, and crucify the Flesh; will those withstand the Attacks of Concupiscence, the Assaults of Satan, the fawning Charms of the World, who inflame the Blood with high Feeding, who embolden Passion by a criminal Condescendence, and foolishly brave the Force of the Devil's battering Engines, without the Armour of Prayer, Humility, and Mortification?

Lady. Pray, Sir, be pleased to cut out some Work for Ladies; set 'em a Task, regulate their Employment; I suppose you'll remove us at least four Miles from London, as the Government does on Occasion *Papists*; or provide us with Wheels and Flax; or confine us to the Dairy to make Cheese-Cakes and Custards for the Family.

Euseb. No, Madam, Town-Air is proper for your Complexion. I am not for Removal into the Campaign,
nor

nor for gracing your Ladyship with the Title of Spinster; (tho' perchance the Law does) I am of no levelling Principles; Quality has Prerogatives, and I would have you maintain 'em: But then if you are a Lady, you are also a Christian, and must make good the Character, *id est*, you must love those very things you hate, and hate those you dote on: Ease is your Darling, and Pleasure your favourite Inclination; you must withdraw your Affection from the one, and prosecute the other with Aversion; you pamper your Body to Excess, and caress it almost to Idolatry; you must treat it like an Enemy; you must cut off all superfluous Sollicitude, and stint it to what is merely necessary; your Equipage and Furniture must answer your Rank, not your Vanity; and you must measure 'em also by your Husband's Estate, as well as by his Quality; you must educate your Children in the Fear of God, and give 'em Breeding suitable to their Extraction.

" Her Ladyship flew out into a Passion; and had not
 " *Eleutherius* returned in the Nick of time, *Eusebius*
 " might have found by Experience, that good Counsel
 " is oftentimes ill received: But *Eleutherius's* Presence
 " conjured the Tempest. He begg'd *Eusebius's* Pardon
 " for having disappointed him, and told him ingenu-
 " ously, he came from beating the Drum, to invite two
 " Volunteers to continue the Combat, that they refu-
 " sed to enter into Service.

" Pray, Sir, replied *Eusebius*, let the Controversy sleep,
 " I have delivered my Opinion, if it jars with yours,
 " I cannot help it; you are your own Master. After
 " some indifferent Discourse, *Eusebius* returned Home,
 " and the next Day gave a Visit to *Neander*, and pro-
 " secuted his former Discourse thus.



DIALOGUE VI.

*Eusebius instructs Neander in the Duties that regard
 our Neighbour.*

Euseb. I Toucht briefly at our last Meeting the Branch of
 Christian Duty that relates to God. I'll now
 sumas

summ up the most essential Parts of your Obligation towards your Neighbour.

I.

Love your Neighbour, as your self, says the Text; and our blessed Redeemer assures us, that Love, Concord, and Union, are the most distinguishing Qualities of a Christian. The primitive Believers set such a Value on this darling Vertue of God made Man, that one Heart seem'd to animate all their Bodies, and one Soul to govern all their Actions: so that the very Heathens, who hated their Religion, admired their Charity, and were forc'd to confess, that nothing but a Divine Hand could strike that heavenly Concord from such a Discord of Humours, Inclinations, and Interests.

And lest Self-Love might restrain the word *Proximus*, as the *Jews* confine it, to Country-men, Friends, and Relations, our Saviour has been pleas'd to extend it to all Mankind; so that without Distinction, without Limitation, it takes in the whole Species. Whosoever bears the Impress of God on his Forehead, though he carry that of the *Beast* on his Heart, is still our Neighbour. No Distance of Place can cut off the Affinity, no Length of Time can wear out the Obligation.

Nor must this Divine Vertue only play on our Tongue, or evaporate into genteel Discourses, or smooth Compliments wrapt up in Terms of Courtship; no, it must not end in Grimace or Ceremony; but stand the Test of Action; fine Protestations of Kindness, too too often veil traiterous Designs, and sugar'd Words poisonous Intentions: Nor is it a new Treachery to present the Olive of Peace with one Hand, and the *Stiletto* with the other.

II.

Christian Charity taken in its full Latitude, implies Precepts both *negative* and *positive*; by those you are most severely forbid to contrive any Mischief against your Neighbour; by these you are commanded to be as useful to him as your Circumstances permit, and his Necessities require.

III.

Hence you must not invade your Neighbour's Honour, nor make any Attempt upon his Reputation: A good Name

Name is no contemptible Treasure; the *Wise Man* prizes it above an Estate; it sets off Birth, and gives an Air even to Poverty; it shines brighter than Wealth, and sparkles more than all the Tinsel Gaudry of Fortune; it supports Grandeur, and sweetens Misfortune. A Bankrupt that has lost his Coin, if he has not forfeited his Honour, has a Resource at Command. Though his Fortune be fallen, he has a Fund to rebuild it on! But a Man without Honour is dead to all the Offices of Society and Commerce; now when his moral Capacity lies in the Grave, his Physical one alone creates Misery and Contempt to himself; Sport for some, and Pity for others.

God has so entailed this Blessing to every Individual, that it's not at our Disposal; we can neither make over this Property by Deed of Gift, Bill of Sale, or Mortgage at Pleasure. Much less can any other Man lay any Claim to it. You may commence a Suit of Law against me, if you think I am your Debtor; but you can't put in a Bill against my Honour. If I have wrong'd you, sue for Satisfaction; strain my Goods, but assail not my Good Name.

Yet, Good God! with what Freedom, with what Boldness do we attack our Neighbour's Reputation? One would think Fame, like *bona adespota*, Goods without Owner, belonged to the first Invader.

Detraction is universally the Discourse *a-la-mode*, not only among the Frie, but also among the Nobility. Our Conversations are begun and carried on at our Neighbour's Expence, and so we laugh and riot at Free-cost; we drag out his most secret Failings to the Bar, nay, and hall 'em to Execution without Authority, without Warrant, yes, with a greater Crime.

Suppose his Crimes were real; what then? Who made Judges? Who commissioned us to hang the Delinquent Effigy? To proclaim on the House Tops what he committed in his Closet? Though he has lost his Honour in the Sight of God, he stands fair in the Esteem of Men, and has Right to continue so, till his Crimes betray themselves, and expose his Iniquity to the Publick: If he has done ill, God will call him to a severe Account, but we must not intermeddle. It's our Duty to pity a Sinner, and to pray for him, but not to upbraid him.

I only

I only jested, (says one.) But why must I pay for your Diversion? Though you publish my Faults in Jest, you stab my Reputation in Earnest. But besides, by this very Excuse, you acknowledge your self a Fool; to prove your Innocence: For to *jest*, and to *play the Fool*, are in Practice synonymous.

He is my Enemy, says another.) Did you inform the Company of this Circumstance, you might perchance detract more, and sin less; for who believes an Enemy? On such an Occasion all goes for Satyr and Invective. When the Heart is out of Tune, the Tongue never goes right; but you whet and oyl your Darts, that they may pierce deeper. You command me to conceal your Passion; and then detect my Life to shew me for a Monster; and thus you call in Artifice to second Malice, and mis-use your Wit, to ruin an Innocent, and to enhance your Guilt.

But why am I your Enemy? Because I would not resolve to be your *Dupe*. You set Traps to ensnare me; I discovered the Ambuscade, and had Wit to avoid it. And thus you take the Liberty to bespatter my Fame, because you wanted Power to affront my Person.

Yet, though I am your Enemy, you are not, I suppose, an Infidel. If I have failed in my Duty, must you betray yours for Company? You are a Christian, and must therefore either forget or forgive. My Impiety cannot warrant yours. Revenge is *causa major*, and only belongs to the Court of the most High. At his Bar alone we must plead our Cause, and from his upright Judgment we must expect redress.

Ah, Dear, *Neander*! let us turn our Eyes homeward, and examine our own Conduct; we may perchance find there Matter for Satyr, and Work for Repentance. Here we may blame without Detraction, and condemn without Sin. But it's both mean and unchristian, (like Flies) to hover about our Neighbour's Stores. Put a Centinel over your Tongue; it's a slippery Member; Nature has framed it for Motion, and Malice has fitted it for any Mischief; a Child can set it a running, but all the Force of Reason, all the Checks of Conscience, are not able to stop it in its Career.

But above all Things, be cautious and tender of Ladies Reputations: A Woman's Honour, like her Sex, is soft

complexion'd; the very Breath sullies its Lustre, and a Touch dashes it in Pieces. Wounds made by the Tongue, (like the biting of Crocodiles) are above the healing Vertue of Balsam, and the Skill of Surgery. *Quod dentibus laceravit, nunquam sanatur.* An indiscreet Word bolted out at Random, without Design, without Malice, oftentimes stabs the Fame of the Female Sex, and every Wound is Mortal.

My Blood has often curdled in my Veins, when I heard Gentlemen magnify their infamous Conquests, and raise cruel Trophies on the Ruins of Women's Honour: I had not Patience to hear the Bravades, nor Power to hinder 'em. What will these People blush at, (thought I) who proclaim their Infamy, and promulge their Shame? Certainly they must think it a fine thing to be a Monster, why else do they triumph in Lewdness, and sport with Debauchery?

These mighty Victories are either real or pretended; if real, can fancy frame any thing more disingenuous, more diabolical, than first to wheedle a Lady out of her Innocence, and then to prostitute her Honour to the wanton Caprice of a Club of Reprobates, who will not fail to discover her Shame at the next Rendezvous, and to multiply their own Crimes by lampooning hers? Here is a Brace of Sins, both smell strong of Malice, both forebode Damnation.

If pretended only, the Crime is yet of a deeper Die; 'tis of a more formidable Aspect, of a more gygantic Size: Here is Innocence at the Block, and Guilt commits the Murder.

I know in the next World God will call to a most severe Account, these Christian *Canibals*, that welter in Blood, and (like famish'd Wolves) worry their own Species. But I would have the Wisdom of the Nation make some Provision against such brutal, such inhumane Attempts. Why shall a High-way-man hang for taking my Purse, and a Rake go unpunish'd, who invades my Honour? Why shall a Rape upon a Woman's Body be revenged with a Halter, and Violence upon her Fame be rewarded with Applause? If the Faults be greater, why are not the Punishments at least equal? Why is there not a Restraint on the Tongue, as well as on the Hands? Is it because it's less capable of Discipline?

F

What,

What, must the Greatness of the Mischief be a Plea for Impunity? Because this *puny petulant* Member commits more dismal Crimes than our whole Body, must it enjoy a more uncontroll'd Liberty? I would have these Beasts of Prey forc'd out of Savageness and Cruelty by Law and Discipline; they should be clapt in the Pound, or cooled with a hot Iron: or at least we should keep in Pay a Brigade of Hunters to ferret our Defamators, and to clear the Nation of this noxious Vermin, as once we did of Wolves: But I fear the Distemper is past Cure; those who are infected, carry the Contagion to the Grave. Not one in a thousand repents.

Nean. Why so? Is Detraction one of those Sins that are neither pardoned in this Life nor the other? True Sorrow is a Catholicon, an universal Salve for all the Wounds of Conscience.

Euseb. Right, true Repentance has a kind of Omnipotence; it disarms divine Justice, and turns God into Mercy, but then it must be *true, real, sincere*. Now, do ye think these Men of Honour (as they are pleased to stile themselves) will ever resolve to repair a ruin'd Reputation at the Expence of their own? Will they set a disjointed Fame at their own Charge? No, no!

Nean. Can't I re-instate a Man in the just Possession of his Honour, without forfeiting my own? Express your Mind clearer, I conceive not what you would be at.

Euseb. Detraction is a Sin against Justice, and therefore by the Laws of God and Nature, the Offender lies under an indispensable Obligation of indemnifying the injur'd Person. *Non remittitur peccatum, donec restituatur ablatum.* Now the Detractor rifles his Neighbour's Honour, he blasts his Reputation, he must therefore make good the Loss; and as the Tongue is guilty of the Theft, so it must make Satisfaction. For the Wounds of Honour are only heal'd by the Instrument that made 'em. The Criminal must acknowledge his Fault, he must confess that Passion run away with his Reason; that Malice carried him beyond his Duty, and Truth also; that what he laid to his Neighbour's Charge, was hatch'd in his own Brain, or taken upon Credit; and if a bare Asseveration will not do the Work, he must back his Confession with an Oath.

Nean.

Nean. This is severe: What, must a Gentleman give himself the Lye? Flesh and Blood cannot practice such rigorous Morals; the Remedy is worse than the Disease; and if your Casuistry be Oorthodox, it's easier for a Camel to pass through the Eye of a Needle, than for a Detractor to enter into Heaven.

Euseb. Under Favour, *Neander*, the least Sin is a greater Evil, than the greatest Infamy; and I hold it much more easy to blush for an Aspersion, than to burn for it eternally.

Nean. Don't Men charge up to the Cannon's Mouth to gain Honour, and leave their Bodies in the Breach to be carried off with Applause? Nay, do they not oftentimes march up to the Out-works of Hell, to maintain their purchased Reputation? Can you therefore think, that those Bravoes, who tremble more at the Shadow of a Disgrace, than at all the Terrors of Damnation, will buy Pardon at the Expence of their Honour?

Euseb. The Question (dear *Neander*) is not what Men do, nor what Men will do, but what they should do. Were Practice the Standard of Duty, we might reform the Gospel, as well as the Kalendar; we might turn those Woes God has pronounced against Injustice, Drunkenness, and Whoredom, upon Justice, Sobriety, and Chastity: For it's certain these Vertues are invisible in Practice, and those Vices are too too fashionable. But, *Neander*, though Custom and Practice may enhance Guilt, they cannot lessen it.

Men are fond of Honour to Madness and Frenzy. It's a *noli me tangere*; the least Attempt upon this darling Folly is often revenged with Murder. But then, methinks, the Inclination we have to conserve our own Fame, should inspire some Tenderness for that of our Neighbour. For have we not Reason to suppose he is no less acquainted with the Value of this inestimable Treasure, than our selves, and that he would be as unwilling to expose it to the Mercy of petulant Tongues? Perchance, *Neander*, I rate it to the Height of its Worth, yet I give God's Favour the Preference: One Grain of his Divine Grace out-weighs a Tun of a Hector's Reputation. In a Word, I would live an Age under the Stroaks of the most picquant Disgrace, I would sheath in my Breast all the Darts of Malice, Envy, and Poverty,

either to die Innocent, or Repent; for all these Miseries are fleeting and transitory; but the Reward of Virtue, and the Punishment of Vice, are both eternal. If therefore your Men of Honour will rather stand by their Crimes, than recant, I would have 'em train'd up in the Discipline of *Bedlam*; a Switch is the best Remedy against Madness.

Besides, why is an humble Confession a degrading Satisfaction? The Name of a Christian is glorious; how then can the Duty lie under Reproach? If the Profession be honourable, the Practice of it cannot be shameful. Why then do we tremble at Shadows, and run from Monsters that take their Deformity from Imagination?

I did not blush to wound my Neighbour's good Name; why should I be ashamed to heal it? Sin should be waited on by Infamy, as it is by Remorse; and Repentance should be accompanied by Glory; but by a strange *Legerdemain*, the Devil has turn'd the Tables, and tack'd Shame to this, and Impudence to that: But however, Repentance is an honest Act; it's worthy of a Man, and the indispensable Duty of a Christian; why then should it fear a Witness? The Difference between good and ill Men lies not in the Esteem of Vertue, but in the Practice; for both equally value it. But the first only possess it, because the others will not go to the Charge of procuring it.

Nean. Pray, is not Fear a clownish Vice; a Female Weakness? Does it not sit ungenteelly on Quality? Now what can bring a Gentleman to the Bar, and clap him on his Knees, with a *Pray forgive me* in his Mouth, but this mean Passion?

Euseb. You are mistaken; Cowardice and Fear are neither synonymous in Philosophy, nor Morals: That is always a Vice, this is often a Vertue. When Prudence commands Fear, Boldness is Temerity and Folly: It's Cowardice to despond and sink under a Danger, that Valour can subdue; but it's Rashness to engage with one above the Strength of Humane Force. Has then a Gentleman less Courage, because he trembles at the impartial Justice of an enraged Deity? Because he dares not wrestle with the Omnipotent, or stand the shock of his Fury? Because he'll rather repent than die in Obstinacy, and rather return to his Duty, than suffer eternal

ly for transgressing it? *Neander*, let not the wild Notions of our pretended Gentlemen be your Guides: their Principles are as corrupt as their Practice, and their Reason is as bad as their Conscience.

Nean. Are you not a Member of the Port-Royal Club.

Euseb. Why do you ask this Question?

Nean. I am told they are mighty Patrons *de la morale severe*, they preach up Rigour to such an exorbitant Height, that one would think God's great Prerogative Mercy, was either wore out, or extinct. Your Morals have a Flavour of Rigorism; they are *sour, morose, ill-natur'd*, and call for a Dram of Charity. For look ye, Sir, Detraction (as the World goes) is no Phantasm, it's a very real thing, and keeps good Company: This alone, pours Life into Conversation; it quickens Discourse; without it Mirth would languish, and good Humour sleep. I have seen your *Seventh-form* Wits, as mute, (as if their Mouths were padlock'd) when any serious and innocent Subject came in their Way; but when their Neighbour's Conduct was brought before 'em, their Tongues run before their Conscience; they would rake his Life in Pieces, they would rip up his Breast, dissect his Thoughts, and then draw Demonstrations from mere Conjectures; they would hand his Reputation about the Table, till it fell to the Ground, and blow over it, till it smell as rank as the Breath that caused the Stench, and disgorged the Infection. Notwithstanding these People hoped to be saved, without stooping to the Satisfaction you speak of. In short, every Man endeavours by Detraction and Out-rage to undermine his Brother's Fame, and no Man so much as thinks of repairing it. Nay, I never heard the Clergy recommend it to dying Persons as a Duty; but either as an Act of Decency, or of Edification. Can I suppose you are better informed of a strict Obligation than the *Ministry*? or better vers'd in Casuistry than Divines? *Eusebius*, let us damn no Body.

Euseb. I remember when stigmatized Villains with Narratives and Discoveries libelled honest Patriots into *Newgate*, and cut off their Honours and Lives with Fears and Jealousies; when they sowed the Innocent in Bear-Skins, and then set all the Beagles of the Faction about

their Ears; when they profaned *Bailies* with Perjuries, and butchered their Fellow-Subjects Fame at the Bar, to quarter their Bodies at *Tyburn*. These Knights of the Post flung not up, I suppose, their Pretensions to Heaven: Tho' I have not seen any Recantation; yet I am sure, unless God nulls all the Laws of Nature, and calls in the Gospel, or issues out under his great Seal an *Amnesty*, they'll fall short of their Expectation.

I confess, this Disease of the Tongue is Epidemical; the Use of Speech has so swerved from its original Institution, that it's become an Incumbrance and a Snare to Mankind. I look upon the Faculty rather as a Penalty, than a Prerogative; and were we divested of it, though we should be unfit for Conversation, we might hope to be more innocent. Now, whether our Calumniators hope to be saved, is a Question. I am apt to believe their Religion and Conscience are of a Piece, and that they confine their Fears, Hopes, and Desires, within the Compass of this World: For certainly, the Dread of eternal Fire might cool their Passions, and check their Malice. [Where they persuaded of another World, would they not fall with more Scruple, and rise with more Vigour? But if they hope for Salvation without Satisfaction, they build on a deceitful Bottom.

Neander, Once more let me advise you to be tender of your Neighbour's Honour. Give Ear to the Voice of Nature, that commands you *to do as you would be done by*: You can't chuse but hear this just, this equitable Admonition, unless we stop our Ears, and cast Reason into a mortal Lethargy; nay, we must approve the Counsel, so that we can neither plead Ignorance nor Impotence. And certainly a sick Man deserves rather Laughter than Pity, that will rather struggle with a Disease, and groan under the Pangs of a burning Fever, than apply a Remedy.

Yet after all, I grant a disjointed Reputation is not easily set; and therefore I beseech you, to avoid a Mischiefe, that draws after it such a dismal Consequence. If other Men have a mind to be eternally miserable, let 'em have that Satisfaction; but be not so ill advised, as to wait on 'em. Should a Man put Fire to his House, or leap into a boiling Caldron, the Frolick would scarce go round. Yet certainly, those that break in upon ano-

ther

ther Man's good Name, and never resolve to repair the Injury, hazard a thing more precious than a House or Life. Why therefore shall we refuse to comply in one Case, and not in the other?

I have made a short Survey of Detraction, and laid before you a faint Prospect of its dangerous Consequences: But it avails not the Patient to know the Nature of his Distemper, unless he be told the Remedy. I will therefore prescribe a *Recipe*. Certainly the Physician's Method is applicable to Diseases of the Soul, no less than to those of the Body. We must strike at the Cause, before we can hope to master the Effect. Now if we trace Detraction up to its Origin, we shall find it spring from Pride and Envy: For its a kind of Aposteme that lies at the Heart, and breaks out at the Mouth.

Though all Sins have a Flavour of Pride, yet Detraction has a greater Dose of this bad Humour than ordinary. It's the chief Ingredient of this outrageous Crime; it discomposes the Stomach, and then immediately gives the *Heart-burning*; and then the Tongue, which is its Index, falls into Disorders. A Man smitten, like young *Narcissus*, with his own Excellencies, looks down from the Pinnacle of his soaring Conceit, on other Mortals, as Vassals; he fancies Praise is a Inheritance entailed on his Merit; that either to respect or honour another, is to invade his Property, and to set against him an usurping Competitor. Hence he runs in Quest of a Foil, to make his own Perfections appear more gawdy, and sparkle with more Eclat. Now what can give a more charming Turn to his supposed Talent, than his Rival's Folly? Hence he rallies up in a Body all the Auxiliary Forces of Anger and Revenge; he takes the Field, and maraudes upon his Fame; he dissects the poor Creature's Actions, and exposes the whole Anatomy of his private Transgressions to the View and Censure of the publick. For he wisely fancies, that the Fabrick of his Vanity will stand unmoveable on the Ruins of a Rival's Reputation. Did the Breasts of the proud and haughty-minded Men lie open to Sight; could we rifle all the abstruse and dark Recesses of their Hearts, what Sallies of Joy should we discover at the most innocent Oversight of a Competitor? And then, whoever crows within at the Misfortune, will proclaim it at the first Occasion;

sion: For Joy, like Grief, is a stifling Humour, unless it throws off the Oppression.

If therefore you desire to speak ill of no Body, think not too well of your self; set not too exorbitant a Price upon your Merits; remember you are no Phoenix, the only Individual of your Species; those Qualities you possess are mere Gratuities, the Effects of God's Liberality, not of your Deserts; you had no right to be, much less to be great, beautiful, or rich. Is it not Madness therefore for you who can lay Claim to nothing, to engross all the Gifts of Nature and Fortune? Think not, God has exhausted his Treasure on you alone; he scatters his Favours where he pleases; and if he provides more plentifully for your Neighbour than for you, why do you complain? Must you be evil, because God is good? Must you cast a malicious Glance on another, because he has received some Marks of his great Maker's Kindness? Discompose not your Thoughts for other People's Advantages, but enjoy your own with Thankfulness. Fix just Bounds to your Desires, as well as to your Undertakings, otherwise you'll rear up imaginary Castles of Greatness, to create to your self a real Torment.

But if you will contend for an honourable Post, manage the Contest fairly; push on your Pretensions with Vertue and Generosity. Let Merit bear away the Prize, not Outrage, and if your Rival carry off the Advantage, rather applaud the Conquest, than revile him. By lessening his Parts or Conduct, you burlesque your own; but then if you complain, and curse in a Corner, you only betray your Importance, Ill-Nature, and Impiety; in fine, look at your Failings and his through the same Glass, and you'll see an humbling Spectacle; you'll behold so many Objects worthy of Blame, that you'll have no great Stomach to censure others.

Envy is the second Source of Detraction. This is an ill-natur'd Vice, it loves ill for ill's sake, and takes Pleasure in Torment; it's a kind of *Turn-key* by Birth, and an Executioner by Profession; it feeds on Stench, and sucks *Rats bane* from Balms, and Infection from Perfumes; it never does a good Turn, but when it designs an ill one; and seldom takes Things by the right Handle; Mischiefs makes up its Employment, Plagues and Famines are its

Diversion,

Diversion, its Smiles are like blazing Comets, which either hatch Treason, or portend it. What Wonder, if a Man possess'd by this Fiend plays the Devil, who is surnamed *Accusator Fratrum*!

But though any Mischief lies within the Reach of an envious Man's Wish, many are removed out of the Verge of his Power: Some move too high to be shot at, others too low; but neither Place nor Station is a sufficient Fence against the Tongue. A Dwarf may engage with a Gyant at this Weapon, or a Clown with a Lord. And for this Reason, when the envious Man can't come at his Antagonist's Person, he sets upon his good Name, and falls foul upon his Honour; and when by the Help of keen Satyr and false Glasses, he has beat down the Out-works that fenc'd his Fortuhe from Insult and Ruin, he draws his Cannon nearer, and raises Batteries against his Grandeur and Estate that support it: For he knows that the best built Fortune can't be stable, when Reputation (that propt it) is removed. Thus we see *Socrates* kept his Ground, and even triumphed over the Calumnies of his Accusers, whilst his Reputation interposed. But when a buffooning Comedian droll'd him into Contempt, he appear'd no less guilty before the Judges, than despicable on the Stage. So that in Conclusion Envy found him guilty, and the Senate pronounced the Sentence.

Methinks it's superfluous to dissuade a Man from this Vice. Interest is more powerful than Reason. We dote on Pleasure, and run from Pain by the Instinct of Nature. Who will not rather chuse a Prison with Satisfaction, than a Palace with Torment? But an envious Man, instead of following the Current of Nature, bears up against it. He labours for labours sake, and drudges for the mere Expectation of Misery. He leads the Life of *Cain*, haunted with the Spectres of his own Crimes from within, and with a thousand Jealousies from abroad; other Peoples Happiness creates his Torments; their Prosperity gnaws his Entrails, and his Impotence, to over-cast the Sun-shine of their Fortune, claps him on the Wheel. Now a Man that can fall in Love with Pain, and court Disquiet, must not be cast in the same Mould that other Mortals are: And therefore I should think it as easy to dissuade People from Envy, as from vaulting down a Precipice.

But

But besides, a Man that envies others, is always paid in the same Coin; his Honour will be as roughly handled; when one contests with Multitudes, he stands on the lower Ground, and fights at a Disadvantage. This is the envious Man's Case. For he can't but know the disingenuous Descants on others Actions, will reach the Ears of the offended Persons. Defaming Reports have a miraculous Sympathy with those that Distance of Place is not able to dead the Echo; they rebound from Tongue to Tongue, are tossed from Hand to Hand, till they come to the Knowledge of the Injur'd; and generally (like Snow-Balls) they encrease in the Journey. What a grating Noise then will they make in the Ears of the defamed Person? Will not he think of Reprisals? Will he not treat your Honour with as little Regard as you have his? And God send such an easy Satisfaction may aswage his Resentment. When Men sit Judges in their own Cause, they make the Bills of Losses and Damages rise high; who knows but they may demand Blood, and sacrifice your Life to the *Manes* of their murdered Reputation?

In fine, *Neander*, remember you must die. When Death hath sealed your Eyes, you'll find all the Darts of the Tongue shot at your Neighbour, stick in your own Soul; you'll feel the Smart, but will find no Lenitive, no Cure: Why then shall we run headlong into those Crimes we must either deplore here, or burn for hereafter? Let us look before us, and not like Beasts follow the mere Impressions of Passion. Let us show we are Men, not by our Vices, but by our Vertues. To have Reason, and to act against it, is to debase our Species.

IV.

As God has fenced our Neighbour's Fame, so he has been careful to guard his Possessions against all the Attempts of Avarice and Injustice. *Non furaberis*, says he, in the Decalogue, *Thou shalt not steal*; and then he threatens the Criminal with the Sentence of his high Displeasure, unless he cancels the Transgression with a sincere Repentance. I apprehend, *Neander*, some Gentlemen mistake this Command: They fancy it reaches only Pads, Cut-purses, or High-way-men: But this is a Mistake; it takes in all who act against the Laws of Justice; and for this

this Reason, I fear, that many who hang at *Tyburn*, are often less criminal, than some of those who stand Spectators of the Tragedy, or perchance who sat on the Bench. For in all Kingdoms, Laws are (as *Solon* said) like Cobwebs, that hamper small Flies, whilst the greater break thorough 'em. Poor People bear the Punishment of Injustice, and great ones carry off in Triumph both Pleasure and Profit. These are too big for Execution, though not for Guilt. They can sue for an indigent Neighbour's Field, because it lies conveniently, and persuade the Judges they have more Right, because they have more Money and Credit. The Lustre of Gold often dazles Lawyers out of Conscience, and just Possessors out of Lordships. Right ebbs and flows by the secret Influence of *Guineas*. For let me tell you, *Neander*, the Justice of a Cause sprouts up, and thrives miraculously under a Fee.

But though these Men carry the Suit in the Eyes of the World, they lose it at God's high Court of Justice, and their Souls also; nor is there any Difference between these Over-reachers and Cut-purses; but that they are ten times more criminal. Among the *Lacedaemonians* a clear Theft pass'd for a Vertue. Are not some Christians of the same Persuasion? But for all that, though a *Spartan* Jury might possibly find 'em *not guilty*, they'd find no such Indulgence in the Vale of *Jehoshaphat*.

I never yet understood, how Sollicitations, and Recommendations of Causes to the Judges, how double and triple Fees could be well reconciled with this Law, *Thou shalt not steal*: For either you doubt of the Integrity of the Bench, or you do not. If the first, you cast a Scandal on the Face of the Government; you arraign either the Capacity or the Integrity of the Prince; *i. e.* you suspect he wants Judgment in the Choice of Magistrates, or has advanced on purpose those who would betray the Property of the Subject. Now such an *Innuendo* is disrespectful, rash, and highly unchristian.

But besides, if really you doubt of the Judges Integrity, your Conduct is foolish. For if a Judge will sell a favourable Sentence to the Plaintiff, he'll be no less kind to the Defendant, if he out-bids him. A Man then should be first sure of Success, before he parts with his Money, otherwise he will be gulled out of his Pretensions, and pay for his Disappointment.

Again,

Again, this Practice runs quite counter to all the Dictates of Conscience and Justice. For if Gain and Interest be a Magistrate's weak side, if I know he measures Right by the Weight of Silver, and barter Law for Money, can I pamper his Inclination, or feed his corrupt Appetite; or strike in with his sinful Distemper? No more, certainly, than I can with a safe Conscience push him down a Precipice; for if it be a Sin to permit one, when I can hinder it, is it not a Sin to persuade a Crime; nay, to buy one?

If the second; *i. e.* If you suppose your Business lies in the Hands of upright Men, that square their Verdicts by the Laws, not by Partiality and Favour, why are you eternally upon the Hoof? Why do you tire them and your self too with tedious Applications? Why do you drain your Pockets to enrich *Pettifoggers* and *Attornies*? This Trouble is superfluous, and the Expence unneedful. In a Word, Sir, the Conduct is either unprofitable or unjust.

But if you doubt in your Cause, let it fall, at least push it on no further, with your Credit or Purse; for all you can expect, is to gain a Suit, and lose your Soul.

Nean. If I can juggle a Neighbour out of an Estate by Quirks of Law, and by a genteel Turn of the Hand, bubble him out of a considerable Sum, may I not put him to graze upon the Common, without any Obligation to restore?

Enseb. The very Question is a Scandal, not only to Christianity, but to Humane Nature; you are obliged not only to return the Capital, but to indemnify him for all the Losses consequent thereto.

Nean. Nay, Sir, I am of your Opinion; for why should a Man gain by his Crimes? Yet once I fell into the Company of a Man of Parts, of Character, and Reputation in his Country, who thought otherwise of the Matter: We discours'd the Point, yet I could never get him over to my Opinion: He held so fast to Non-restitution, that there was no moving him. A hearty Repentance, (said he) without Restitution, makes a sufficient Atonement for the Offence. He told me I was unskill'd in Casuistry. I confess'd I had read no Casuist but the Bible and Nature.

Euseb. With Submission to the Gentleman's Character, Parts, and Station; he was either a great Fool, or a superlative Knave, fit for *Bedlam* or *Newgate*. Was he not a Lawyer?

Nean. He had studied in the Inns of Court.

Euseb. I thought so. It's a healing Doctrine for a wounded Conscience, a palatable and easy Remedy, a *Catholicon* for all the Aches of the Mind, and the Gripes of an over-charg'd Stomach; and perchance the Use is universal, otherways once at least in a Twelvemonth we might see a *Dives* transform'd into a *Lazarus*, a *Lord* into a *Lacquey*, and a *Lady* into a *Chamber-maid*; we might see those who sit majestically in Coaches with a long Wig, and a Snuff-Box *a-la-mode*, sit behind 'em. Good God! how many gawdy Birds would make as naked a Figure as the Daw in the Fable, if their Peacock Plumes were return'd to their Owners? *Neander*, pray tell that Gentleman I am neither satisfied with his Conscience nor his Skill; he that will not restore stolen Goods, is more criminal than he that conceals 'em; and he that will keep an ill-purchased Estate in spite of Justice, will seize on the next that lies in his Way; and then how can he understand *Cook* and *Littleton*, who can't read the very Alphabet of Nature? A hearty Repentance without Re-stitution is a Dream.

Dear *Neander*, never raise the Pile of a great Fortune on a Bottom of Fraud and Injustice; it's an unstable Foundation, and unable to bear the monstrous Weight of Crimes, they crush in a Moment the best built Structure, and entomb the Criminal, together with all his Grandeur, under the Ruins of his towring *Babel*. The Triumphs of unjust Men are always short-lived. God takes Pleasure in strangling 'em in the very Cradle; they pass like Lightning, and leave nothing behind but Smoak and Vapour: Their Fall is no less amazing than their Rise; they pass off like Phantasms, or else live in Penury and Contempt, or die like Reprobates; they carry the most legible Marks of God's Malediction stamp'd on their Foreheads, and tear almost all Men, without being pitied by any; so that Divine Vengeance begins their Torments in this World, to continue 'em eternally in the other.

I'll not follow this crying Vice thro' its Branches, nor make an entire Dissection of all its Parts; it runs through
all

Euseb.

all the Veins of Commerce, and almost Conversation; it's found in Play, as well as in Contracts, and is no more innocent under one Shape, than under another; you may call it Over-reaching or Out-witting, if you please, but the change of Names makes no Alteration of the Thing; Nature depends not on Fancy or Caprice, they are the same in Spight of Custom and Disguise.

V.

I must now caution you against Lewdness. It's a noisome Employment to grope in Puddles, and to dig in Muck. And therefore I'll only skim the Surface, and let the offensive Dregs lie at the Bottom. You know God has enacted this Law in the Decalogue, *Thou shalt not commit Adultery*: This Precept does not only restrain Acts of Lewdness, but even Thoughts and Desires: For Impurity in Idea draws after it a real Hell; the Smoak that vanishes in a Moment, kindles an eternal Fire.

Nean. I suppose neither Gentlemen of the Court, nor Officers of the Army, come within the Compass of this Prohibition. God surely and Nature have issued out in their Favour a Patent of Exemption.

Euseb. Truly, *Neander*, I never read that either God or Nature, had such a Deference for the Court and Army, or so great a Respect for Quality. Why, Man, let our Courtiers be as great as *Alexander*, and our Soldiers as valiant; there sits a more august, and a more powerful Master above, whose Commands they must obey, or smart for the Transgression. The Sword has no Privilege above the Plow, nor has Quality any Right above Peasantry, but to greater Torments: *Potentes potentiora patientur.*

Nean. If it be so, our Gentlemen and Soldiers are all struck with a Lunacy. They seem to have entred into an Association against Divine Authority, and endeavour by Practice to repeal the Statute; as if God's Law could cease *per desuetudinem*, as well as human. When *St. Paul* bids every Man take *uxorem*, if he meant a Mistake the Counsel is followed even to a Scruple; but if he did not, our Conduct is scandalous to Impudence, and God's Authority is slighted beyond Contempt and Insolence.

Euseb.

Enseb. The Evil lies deep, and the Disease reaches to the *Lands-End*; few are clear of the Infection; Lewdness is no more a Diversion; no, it's become the grand Business, the Employment of Mankind; nay, it's improved to Science also; Love-Intrigues turn on Method, and are carried on by Demonstration: So that Attempts upon Chastity come off generally with Success. For Women in our Age are as ill furnish'd for Resistance, as an old *Spanish* Town for a Siege. But then the *Dons*, when forc'd to surrender, article for their Honour: This they'll bring off, though the Town stay behind in the Hands of the Conquerors. But our Female Defendants stand not upon such Niceties: they deliver up their Modesty, and go off with *Ignominy*: Confusion I will not say; for Blushes are out of Fashion, unless when it's a Question to practice the Christian Vertues of Sobriety, Temperance, and Chastity.

I have more than once taken a Survey of our Gentry, and I find nine in ten ruin'd by this unlucky Vice; to all intents and Purposes, they have forfeited their Honour, mortgaged their Estates, impaired their Health, their Bodies fall under the Weight of Lewdness, their Purses are scarce able to support it. So that if these young Sparks would take the Pains to cast up their Accounts, they would find their Pleasure have brought them in no other Profit but Poverty, Diseases, and more than one Cause of Repentance. Good God! Why must Appetite have such a strange Ascendant over Reason? Why must Man thus transgress the End of Creation? Appetite was made to obey, Reason to command. To change their Office, is to throw down the Enclosure between Man and Beast. Is it not a Madness to sell this Prerogative for a petty Satisfaction; that like the Book of the *Apocalypses* have a sweet Flavour in the Mouth, and Bitterness in the Heart? But suppose a Man will enjoy Pleasure, is anything palatable but Dirt and Mire? Must he turn Goat or Baboon before he can be pleased? Certainly he is enamour'd of their Nature, he dotes so much on their Games; and I am apt to believe he would range on their Hills, or sport on their Trees, among a Herd of males.

But take all together, I fear the Pleasure does not come up to Expectation. The Gall out-weighs the Honey.

For

For let us suppose, a Man possess'd by the unclean Devil of brutish Love, he lodges all the Torments of the Damned in his Heart, and, what is worse, their Guilt; he shivers and burns, he hopes and despairs, he dreams in Company, and talks in Solitude; all the Features of his beloved Object meet in his Imagination to wound his Heart, and turn the Idol he adores into a Devil to lash him; his Fears keep Pace with his Fondness, and Jealousy treads on the Heels of both, and all conspire to make him wretched. For though Love looks pleasing and pretty in Romance, in Life it's Monster, Tyrant, and Fury.

A Lover knows, that a Woman, who has withdrawn her Fidelity from God, will forsake a Gallant at the least Prospect of Advantage. Hence Disquiet seizes on the Brain, and Jealousy rises from Hell, to clap him on the Torture; like the Devil in the Gospel, it sometime flings him into the Water, sometimes into the Fire; he watches his Treasure with the Eyes of an *Argus*, and lays an hundred Ambuscades to find his Misery, and her Infidelity; so that, though *Miss* be faithful, Monsieur is sure to be miserable.

I say nothing here of Aversion, Hatred, Envy, and a thousand other Vipers, that worry his Heart, and prey upon his Vitals. In short, in a besotted Lover alone are centred all the Frenzies and Follies of *Bedlam*, but that of Mirth. So that Envy can scarce with him more unhappy, nor Malice render him more unfortunate: But if the Intrigue be carried with a Person of an unspotted Reputation, and who stands fair in the Opinion of the World, nay, and who perchance sets up for *Lucretia* and *Vestal*; what Endeavours are made to coart *incognito*, and to play out of Sight? But if after all, the Sin quickens in her Womb, and that within nine Months she be in Danger to fall into Fits of the Mother; what Pangs, what Throws, what Convulsions tear this poor Creature's Breast, and her Gallant's too? In how lively Shapes does Imagination paint her Folly! She suffers all the Torments of Child-birth at the very instant of Conception; besides those of Rage, of Despair, and Confusion; and in the End perchance resolves to conceal one Sin by the Help of another; i.e. Lewdness by Murder; and thus a poor Innocent, who came into the World by a less Sin, is sent

out of it by a greater; and then in all Probability the Tragedy that begun at Mid-night in Darkneſs and Privacy, often ends at Mid-day on a Scaffold. Muſt not therefore one be void of Reaſon to take a petty Pleaſure in Hand, with ſuch a Crowd of Troubles in Reverſion? Ought we not to fence againſt a Vice, ſo charming on the one Hand, and ſo uneaſy on the other?

Nean. What are the beſt Preſervatives againſt this Epidemical Diſtemper?

Enſeb. Take this as a Principle, that Chaſtity is a Gift of God; and therefore implore continually his Divine Aſſiſtance; rely on his Grace, not on your Force; and if you be ſo happy, as not to fall, give him the Glory of the Triumph, and believe that whoſoever preſumes on his own Valour, has already meaſured half the Precipice: God protects the humble, and humbles the proud.

Secondly, Keep Love at a Diſtance, or it will ſurprize you; when once it has ſtormed the Heart, it forces Reaſon to ſurrender; and when Appetite commands, when Paſſion domineers, what can be expected but Brutality? Lock up the Gates of your Senſes; and, as in Frontier-Towns, examine the Paſſengers. Love, like a *Proteus*, borrows all Shapes, and makes its Approaches at all Seasons; ſo that you muſt ſtand upon your Guard, if you intend to avoid a Surprize; and if you can keep this Traytor at Arms length, Lewdneſs will neither have the Face, nor find the Opportunity to aſſail you. But if you admit this Tyrant, if you lodge him in your Breſt, you will have Cauſe to deplore your Slavery, and perchance eternally. For in a Word, Love, like a Viper, eats into the Heart that warms it, and returns Death for the Favour.

Thirdly, Flight is the beſt Defence, the moſt ſecure Rampart againſt the Darts of Lasciviouſneſs; you may as well hope to freeze in Fire, as to converſe innocently in the miſt of Occaſions. I am of *Terullian's* Opinion, that it's eaſier to die for Chaſtity, (as the World goes,) than to live with it in *Balls, Viſits, and Entertainments*. And I look upon it as a certain Truth, that many of the Sex, who have ſurrender'd their Honour to the Flatteries, Importunities and Dalliances of Gallants, would have reſiſted it to the Cruelty of Hangmen.

Enter

Enter not therefore into the *Play-House*; it's the Palace of *Asmodeus*, the Seat of Lewdness, the Nursery of Debauchery. It's with us as *Fornices* were at *Rome*, only with this Difference, that those Crimes are learn'd, contriv'd, and resolv'd on here, the *Romans* actually committed under the black Shade of those infernal Vaults. For my part I am of Opinion, that a Christian cannot with a safer Conscience enter into the *Play-House*, than into a Brothel; as things are managed there, Temptation is stronger on the Stage, and more inviting. The Blackness of the Vice lies under a Disguise; it's blanch'd over with all the Art of Wit and Gawdry; so that nothing appears but the charming part, which fascinates the Eyes, captivates the Ears, dozes the Intellect, and fires the Passions, and then to plain the Way for Action, the Poet burlesques the Terrors of the other World; he paints the Devils rather like Scaramouches to divert, than like Executioners to Torment: He blasphemes the Majesty of God to bring him under Contempt, and so blunts all the Darts of Fear and Apprehension; and then, when Objects draw, when Passions stand prepared, and Restraint is removed, what can be reasonably expected, but Prostitution.

But besides, the Stage not only removes Fear of Punishment, but even rewards Debauchery; for who are they that carry off Applause and Fortunes, but Rakes and Prostitutes? The Poet puts all his Wit in the Mouths of Rooks and Bullies; and if an honest Man appear he is sure to be hooted at, and generally goes off both Fool and Cuckold. Is not this to condemn Vertue, to execute it in Effigy, and to canonize Vice by Deputy? Is not this to say, Gentlemen and Ladies, beware of Chastity and Vertue, they are out of Date in our Age; you'll forfeit your Honour by maintaining it, and grow ridiculous, if you continue innocent. The shortest way to Repute, is, to drive over Conscience, to blush at Honesty, and practice Incontinence. What Vertue is Proof against such murdering Engines? If Hell be a place of Diversion, (as the Poets endeavour to persuade the Audience,) if God be a scare-crow, if Chastity be infamous, and Impurity creditable, who will not rather be lewd with Credit, than chaste with Reproach? I would have both Poets and Players enter a little into themselves; they have all contributed to run down Vertue and Religion, and to bring

Bring Libertinism and Atheism into Fashion. Those prepare the Poison, these present the Potion, dash'd with all the palatable Ingredients of Pomp and Magnificence, that it may go down with Pleasure, and work with Efficacy. I am afraid in the next World they'll be forc'd to answer for the Sins of the Poet and Actors, as well as for those of the Christian, unless by a timely Repentance, and publick Recantation, they ask Pardon of God, and Forgiveness of the Nation, which they have rhimed almost out of Religion, and played out of Conscience.

Fourthly, When Temptation invites, draw up all the dismal Consequences of this wretched Sin, and fix your Thoughts upon 'em. Other Crimes, like the Adder, carry their Poison in their Head; this is a Scorpion that licks up its Venom in its Tail. For though the Sin be charming, its Sequels are dreadful. The Infection flies up to the Brain, like the Sting of the *Tarantula*; and tho' those who are Bit by this poisonous Insect, can dance out the stupifying Humour, and may be fiddled into their Wits, the others are past Cure; they remain in spite of Homily and Exhortation, stupid, brutal, without Judgment, without Honour, without Sense, and oftentimes without Money; but never without Folly, Sighs, Jealousies, Rage, and Despair.

Fifthly, That your Affections may not steal abroad, nor like Butter-flies flutter from one Object to another, chain 'em by lawful Wedlock to a Wife. I know at present, Matrimony (that in *St. Paul's* Days was honourable) lies under no-creditable Circumstances; and we are in part obliged to the Stage-Poets for the Aspersions. They represent this Divine Institution under all the Reproaches of Slavery and Folly, and paint both Sexes so scandalously lascivious, that the Character is enough to deter Christians from the Engagement. I suppose these Gentlemen are seduced by the Stews, to stand up for the Improvement of their Trade; and for this Reason they labour so heartily, to persuade People, lawful Pleasures taste flat and insipid, as if the only charming Circumstance of Pleasure were the Unlawfulness of the Action. This Doctrine is calculated exactly for the Practice of Lucifer and his Associates, but not for Christians; it smells of Smoak, and may in good time heat the Preachers.

Beware of Jealousy. A Wife is often made faithful by not suspecting her of Infidelity, but when without Reason, you question her Loyalty, you only tempt her to betray it. I have heard of a Lady, that kept her Conjugal Vow, whilst her Husband thought she did; but when he accused her falsely, and blasted her Reputation, she murdered her Innocence to revenge the Injury. Some Women are of Opinion, there is little Difference between being unchaste, and being thought so; and therefore go off with the Satisfaction of Infidelity, as well as with the Infamy. A thousand, thousand times happy is that Couple, that by a wise Foresight prevents those Misfortunes, that spring from Diversity of Constitutions and Humours, or at least support with Patience, what Prudence can't avert, and so improve Necessity into a Vertue.

VI.

If God has bless'd you with Children, (says the Scripture, *Prov. 7.*) instruct 'em. God has ingrav'd this Law in the very Heart of Nature, and more than once promulg'd it in the Bible, that Parents might be well convinc'd of this grand Duty, and be perswaded to comply with it; and yet it seems, that no Law is less understood, and more universally neglected in Practice than this. Some Parents, more cruel than the *Ostrich*, bring poor Creatures into the World, and then abandon 'em. Others, like Apes, are so fond of their Brood, they kill 'em with Kindness: Those are guilty of Negligence, these of Indulgence; and all betray their Duty, and by consequence their Conscience.

I have been often scandaliz'd at the insupportable Neglect of some Parents; they made no Difference between their Laqueys and their Children, but that they carels'd those, and eternally tormented these; they herded with the Grooms and Carters, and owed all their Education to the Stable and Kitchen; and if they sent 'em sometimes to School, 'twas only to rid the House, not for their Instruction. They never took the Pains to inform themselves, whether the Master was Black or White? Whether Religious or Impious? A Turk or a Christian? Good God! said I to Sir N. N. what do you mean? You will not hire a Cook without examining his Talent, nor take a Groom without good Security of his Skill; (yet the

is only to serve the Belly, the other to curry Horses,) and will you trust a Child to the Care of a Man, who, for ought you know, has neither Science nor Religion?

Nor have I beheld with Patience the doting Fondness of others. I have seen my young Master often play the Lyon in the Family, and my tender Lady, the Mother, applaud his Insolence, like the *Romans* in *Seneca's Days*. She would embrace the Spark, when she should have chid him; nay, and kiss him for those very things she should have whipt him. To cross the Child, is to stab the Mother; and if he whimpers, she cries in good Earnest; his Passions grow upon him with Age, and a foolish Indulgence emboldens 'em; he asks what he pleases, and obtains what he demands; a refusal sets him on Fire, and then my young *Jupiter* begins to thunder: My Lady trembles at the Tempest she has raised; and instead of laying it by a sober Correction, she foolishly augments it by a thousand Caresses: He is coach'd to Company, to Balls, and the Play-House, and must be Spectator of *Mamma's* Vanity and Follies to learn 'em. Poor Sir *T. H.* saw this fine Menage, but was too dotingly Fond of his Wife to save his Child. He complain'd one Day to me, that his Son was fit for nothing, but either to dance or to quarrel. You are mistaken, said I, have a little Patience and he'll retaliate his Breeding upon you, with Insolence and Out-rage; he is as handsomely equipt for a Rake, as can be; nor was I deceived, for since that he flung himself away upon a Chamber-maid, dipt his Estate, persecuted his Mother, and brought his Father with Grief and Chagrin to his Grave.

You must know, *Neander*, that Man by Nature is half Beast; he has all the Inclinations, all the Passions of the most salvage Animal; and (what is worse) he has Reason to sharpen 'em, and Malice to abuse 'em. But as the most fierce Lyon is tam'd and render'd tractable by Education and Discipline, so Man may be taught Sweetness, Moderation, and Vertue, if he be taken in hand betimes, if his Passions are check'd, and forc'd to obey the Commands of Reason, from the Cradle. But when once Sense has got the Upper-hand, when Passion has tasted the Sweetness of Superiority, and Reason is accustomed to Slavery, you may as soon subdue the fierceness of a full grown Tyger, as persuade Sense and

Appetite to resign the usurp'd Government, or Reason to take it, *Adolescens juxta vitam suam, & cum senuerit non recedet ab ea.* A young Man goes on as he began, and carries the first Impression to the Grave. That you may not therefore cry one Day with the poor Eagle in the Fable, who being mortally wounded by an Arrow trimmed with her own Feathers, sigh'd out this melancholly Complaint, miserable Bird that I am ! What a Fool was I to bring forth Feathers to my own Destruction ! I say, that you may not complain, those Children you give Life to, are the Cause of your Death, observe three things. *First*, So soon as they are capable to know God, teach 'em to fear his Justice, and to love his Goodness, instruct them in Religion, and take Care they practice all the Duties of a Christian. A Child that fears God, will love his Parents; he can't be Religious without being Dutiful, Inculcate a thousand times, that he is made for Heaven, and that he must live virtuously in this World, to be happy in the next : Precaution him against the Vanity of the World, and all its specious Scenes of Deceits and Pageantry, that delude the Eye to seduce the Heart : Discover the Danger before you expose him, and tell him with that admirable Queen *Blanca*, you had rather see him in the Grave, than in Sin : Inspire not into his tender Breast desires of Grandeur; this is a Seed that sprouts up without Sowing : Choak all Tendency of so early a Pride, or else it will grow to his Ruin. I blush at the unchristian Conduct of those Parents, who teach little Creatures, before they can walk, to climb up to the very Pinnacle of Honour; who would make 'em Pages to Antichrist to be great, and would Counsel 'em to be *Mahometans* for the vain Satisfaction of seeing 'em *Bassa's* : When you have furnish'd 'em with Vertue, and provided for their Soul, let 'em think of a Settlement, and aim rather at a Post that is genteel, than great : An elevated Fortune is seldom obtained without vast Crimes, and always supported by greater.

Secondly, Cultivate them with those Arts and Sciences that suit with their Capacity and Condition. For those that have nothing to do, do always more than they ought; and though they are unfit for a handsome Occupation, they are capable of a vicious one.

Thirdly

Thirdly, Give not all your Means to the eldest ; leave a Provision for all : A young Gentleman that begins the World without Money, ends it without Conscience ; When I must rack my Brain to live, I have neither time nor leisure to think of living well. Necessity is the Mother of Vice, no less than Abundance ; and Want is both more troublesome than Affluence, and equally dangerous : Besides, how will you have a Gentleman push forward, who has nothing to improve ? Can he raise a Fortune without Tools to work with, without a Fund to lay the Foundation ? Poverty pals the most generous Spirits ; it crows Industry, and casts Resolution it self into Despair. When you have acquitted your self of these three Points, you have done the part of a Father ; the rest you must leave to Providence, who watches over its Creatures, and never abandons those, who comply with their Duty.

VII.

Your Care must not stop at your Children, let it reach your menial Servants ; though you are their Master, you are also their Father. And for this Reason the Romans call'd House-keepers *Patres-familias*, Fathers of the Household. Besides, as a Christian you are their Brother, and have the Church of Christ for your common Mother ; all these Relations deserve a Tenderness on the one side, and on the other impose an Obligation on you to enquire into their Behaviour, and to provide for their Instruction ; don't so overcharge 'em with Labour, that they can find no time for God. You can't exact so continual a Service, nor is it in their Power to comply with you. They owe more Obedience to God than to you ; and you transgress your Duty, when your Commands cross upon his. Nor is it sufficient to allow them time to look into the Concerns of their Souls, you must see they employ it well : Let 'em meet at Prayers at least once a Day, and punish those that neglect this Duty. Suffer not in your House a Debauchee, though never so useful. Who is a Traytor to his Maker, will betray a Master at the first Occasion. A Man without Conscience is always without Honesty. Besides, Lewdness and Knavery are catching, and one infected Person suffices to scatter the Contagion. Take this for a Principle. The more you take to Heart God's Interest, the more he'll

take care of yours ; he'll crown your Enterprizes with Success, or raise your Soul above the Stroak of Misfortune. In fine, you'll either enjoy Prosperity with a Christian Moderation, or bear Adversity with Pleasure.

VIII.

Confine not Charity within the Walls of your own House, nor employ it wholly about the spiritual Good of your Neighbour ; let the Body feel the Effects of his Tenderneſs, as well as the Soul. When he groans under the Pangs of Poverty, and ſtruggles with Neceſſity, relieve his Indigence out of your own Store-houſe ; let the Measure of your Charity be the Extent of your Ability, and of his Want : What you lay out on the Poor, is not ſpent, but put to Interest ; God is Security for the Reimburſement, ſo that the Payment is infallible. I have ſeen ſome Gentlemen open-handed enough, but then they diſperſed their Charities with ſo unhandſome a Grace, that, methought, they did ill in doing good, and reſuſed an Alms whiſt they gave one ; they ſeem'd to inſult over a poor Creature's Miſery, and ſeldom open'd their Purſe, till they had vented their Gall. This is not to relieve the Indigent, but to throw Shame upon Want, and Confuſion upon Neceſſity ; it's to hang Weight to their Burthen, and to fret Poverty with Contempt : Beſides, it loſes the very Nature of Alms ; for that is not received *gratis*, that is purchaſed with Bluſhes, and at the Expence of Patience. A compaſſionate Look oftentimes reſreſhes more, than a Crown with a ſevere one. And (methinks) I had rather be ſent away with a civil *God be with you*, than be entertained with Peeviſhneſs and ill Nature. A ſmall Fayour well timed becomes conſiderable : The very manner of giving adds to the Gift. Keep not therefore the Poor at a Bay, nor rack them with Queſtions ; to what Purpoſe do theſe Preliminaries ſerve, but either to feed your Curioſity, or to ſpend a fretting Humour ? We are of the ſame Nature ; our Bodies are made of the ſame Clay, and our Souls by the ſame Hand. The difference between the Rich and Poor comes not from Nature or Merit, but from the Ordination of Providence. Some are born to no other Eſtate than that of their Brethren's Charity, that they may praſtiſe Patience ; and others to Abundance, that they

they may exercise Charity ; so that the Vertue of these stand indebted to the Misery of those ; and the Giver is no less oblig'd than the Receiver.

IX.

Begin to practise the Vertues of a Christian betimes ; accustom you Palate to 'em before you have tasted Vice, they'll relish better ; a small Resolution plains the Way to Heaven in the Beginning, and turns Godliness into Pleasure ; but if you stay till Sins have flush'd the Passions, and sharpen'd Appetite, nothing but Violence can secure you ; you will not be able to advance one Step without a Combat ; you must fight your way through all the Squadrons, the Flesh, the World, and the Devil will draw up to oppose you ; and when these Enemies are headed by vitious Habits, God knows, whether you will ever be so hardy, as even to attempt a Conquest so hazardous on the one side, and so laborious on the other.

X.

Indeed a Christian Behaviour among Gentlemen is so unusual, that you must venture to be out of Fashion, you must stand the Shock of Raillery, and perchance the Stroak of a Lampoon ; but these Weapons stick in the Skin, and although they are push'd on with all the Violence of Malice and Profaneness, are not able to draw Blood, or to touch your Reputation. I have often been astonish'd at some Gentlemen, who practis'd Vertue at Home, and Vice in Company ; who betray'd their Conscience to avoid a Blush. This is, said I, to fall into the wretched Blindness of some savage *Indians*, who adore the Devil, that he may do 'em no Harm. If Rakes glory in Evil, why should you be ashamed at Good ? *That* carries along its Condemnation, and this its Justification. Surely shame sits more naturally on Guilt than Innocence.

But could we dive into a wicked Man's Heart, could we pierce into his Soul, we should read most visible Traces of Shame and Confusion, every Moment he casts an Eye on his Vices, and his Neighbour's Vertues. For let me tell you, *Neander*, Piety has an amiable Aspect, it charms its very Persecutors, and even those who stigmatize it in Practice, admire its Beauty. So that though sometimes they

they let fly a Raillery, and shoot a Joke, these petty Arrows fly at Random, and never come near your Honour: Nay, take it for a general Rule, that those Rakes, who flirt at a Christian Demeanour, have a secret Esteem for it.

Oh, said one, I must draw in my Piety, and mew it within my own Walls; I have almost lost my Christian Name, and am scarce known, but by that of *Bigot*. Pray, Sir, said I, let us not startle at Sounds, nor run away from Buffoons; let us construe the Word, and frame right Notions, and then we shall find, that *Bigot* in the *Jargon* of Reprobates, is nothing else but a Man that believes Religion, and dares profess it; that boggles at Oaths, and blushes at Perjuries; that will elevate his Spirits with old *Hock* or new *Campaign*, but not drown his Reason; that has not Courage to laugh at Hell, nor the Impudence to play upon Heaven; that sometimes does good Actions, and always fears bad ones. This is the Height of a *Bigot's* Devotion, according to the modern Use of the Word; so that it imports nothing hurtful, nothing infamous, unless it be a Disgrace to profess Honesty upon Occasions, to practise Morality, and to have a good Conscience.

But let Debauchees burlesque your Piety, must you abandon it? Will you abjure Christianity, because some Libertines sport with Religion; or commence Atheist, to humour Fools? Why then will you be scared out of Piety, or teased out of Morality? Is it honourable in spite of Raillery to acknowledge a God, and a Disgrace to serve him? Is it a Credit to be a Christian, and a Shame to be a good one? No certainly; let us put things together, and act consequently; let us call in Reason to govern Fancy.

Besides, who are those Men that awe us? A Club of Animals, that have more Money than Wit, and more Quality than Conscience; a Pack of Hectors, that live ill, and judge worse; that are pitied by some, and scorned by others; the very Panegyricks of these Men are Satyrs, praise out of their Mouths is scandalous, and blame is glorious. *Neander*, suffer not your self to be laugh'd out of Heaven, nor rallied into Hell; if you can't bear the reproaching Frowns and Smiles of a Man, how will ye endure the Frowns of an angry Deity? If the

the Lash of a petulant Tongue be so sensible, assure your self the Rains of Fire and Brimstone will be more insupportable. Vertue in a Dungeon, is preferable to Sin on the Throne; and Innocence in the Pillory, is more honourable than Guilt on the Bench.

XI.

If you love your Soul, and resolve to save it, avoid the Conversation of Libertines and Atheists; like the Basilisk, their Eyes dart Poison, and their Tongues speak Death: They are Satan's Deputies, and Devils by Proxy. A Libertine is half Fiend, half Beast; Pleasure is his *Summum Bonum*; this he places in Sin like the Devil, and in Mire like the Swine; he circles from the Tavern to the Play-House, from hence to the Stews, and returns to his Lodging the same way; so that his whole Study is to learn Wickedness, and his whole Business to practise it; his Discourse is a Compound of Smut and Blasphemy; his Entertainment unchristian, and his Dialect diabolical; he would feign monopolize the Wit of the Nation, but wants both Fund and Patent; his Knowledge reaches no further than the *Gazette* or the *Courant*, and on Occasions he ventures to vent Nonsense in Metre; his Religion is Universal, calculated for all Meridians; he has one for a Calm, another for a Storm; one for *Europe*, another for *America*; so that it's as difficult to be defined as a *Disjunctive*; in *England* he stickles for his Bishops; in *Scotland* against 'em; he is a *Jew* at *Amsterdam*, a *Musselman* at *Constantinople*; a *Rapist* at *Rome*, and a *Calvinist* at *Geneva*: In a Word, he is any thing without, and nothing within; so that his whole Religion turns upon Convenience and Interest, and is comprized in these Verses.

Quest. *What's Orthodox and true Believing against a Conscience?*

Ans. A good Living.

Quest. *What makes rebelling against Kings a good old Cause?*

Ans. Administ'rings.

Quest. *What makes all Doctrine plain and clear?*

Ans. About two hundred Pounds a Year.

Quest. *And that which was prov'd true before prove false again?*

Ans. Two Hundred more.

XII. An

XII.

An Atheist is an over-grown Libertine ; and if we believe his own Genealogy, he is a *By blow* begot by Hazard, and flung into the World by Necessity ; he moves by Wheels, and has no more Soul than a Windmill ; he is thrust on by Fate, and acts by mere Compulsion ; he is no more Master of his Deeds, than of his Being ; and therefore is as constant to his Word, as the Wind to the same Corner ; so that an Atheist by his own Principles is a Knave *per se*, and an honest Man only *per Accidens*. In fine, he starts out of Dust, and vanishes into nothing.

Nean. All my Concerns are in the Hand of a Man, who will not be very fond of this Character, yet he sets up for an Atheist, and supports the Fraternity with Arguments and Authority.

Euseb. Neander, discharge him out of Hand, he'll certainly ruin your Soul, and may possibly embezzle your Estate. A round Hurricane of Atoms may drive him into the Possession of your Lands, and you out of 'em. A brisk Puff may convey out of sight a necessary Indenture, or raise high the Bill of Reparations ; there is no coming near a Man with Safety, that's void of Conscience ; no trusting him that acts by Fates, or moves by Destiny ; if he be a Slave to Impulse, he is not Master of his Honesty.

Nean. Though he abjures God, he upholds Reason, and keeps touch with Probity ; he values Honour, and would forfeit Life to maintain it.

Euseb. Then he is made up of Contradictions, and one part of his Creed stabs the other ; if there be no God, your Friend is the Spawn of Casualty ; the Child of Matter and Motion, a heap of Dust with a Complex of Ubications, a Figure without Soul, a Statue without Life ; he is all Matter like Beasts, no more capable of Reason than an Ape, of Vertue than *Baalams* Ass, or of Honour than *Caligula's* Consul. In fine, withdraw your Concerns, or you may one Day repent your Confidence : For I must once for all tell you, Honour without Conscience, without Religion, will yield to Interest.

Nean. This cannot be done so soon ; endeavour, I beseech you to gain him ; overturn his Principles, and the Conquest will be easy : You can't oblige him more than by

by entering into a Dispute ; and the shortest Way to win his Favour, is to quarrel with his Tenets.

Euseb. Disputes indeed are natural to Atheists ; for no Men maintain with greater Eagerness they are in the Right, than those that suspect they are in the Wrong ; like Men in a dangerous Road, they love to travel in Company, and so draw in Profelytes to march to Hell with a Caravan.

But, *Neander*, this Itch of arguing is a terrible Argument, they are scared with Doubts, and haunted with Suspicions, that God is no Chymara, it's a Sign that Conscience is uneasy, and makes some Attempts to break all the Barriers of Ignorance, Pride, and Blasphemy.

However, I'll comply with your Desires, and wait upon the Gentleman when you command me : Although I must tell you, a converted Atheist is a Phoenix scarce seen in an Age ; for he is a Mixture of Pride and Ignorance, of much Sense and little Reason ; he confutes Arguments with Laughter, and pretends to frown Demonstration it self into Sophistry. How can Truth (I do not say subdue) but even reach such a Man ? You may as soon fetch down the Moon with a Cannon-Ball, as convince him.

Nean. It's true, but Charity armed with solid Reasons may perchance soften his Obstinacy ; and although you lose your Labour, you'll meet at least in the next World the Reward of your Zeal. I'll tell him you intend to make him a Visit.

Euseb. I am content, *Neander*, I have drawn a short Scheme of your Duty, and wish you so happy as to comply with it ; it will prove the best Support of this Life, and the greatest Comfort in the other. God has interwoven Man's Felicity with his Duty, and twisted his Interest with Pleasure. A good Man is seldom uneasy, and an ill one is always unquiet ; one must be Blind not to discover the Canker at his Heart through all the glittering Pageantry of Greatness and Power : He may rant and laugh, but can't be merry : For certainly there is a great Difference between Noise and Mirth ; their Lives are as unlike as their Ends ; and those are as different as the Pains of the Damned are from the Joys of the Blessed.

“ *Neander*

“ *Neander* took leave of *Eusebius*, with a Promise to
“ call upon him the next Morning. He went immedi-
“ ately to *Theomachus's* Lodgings, (this was the Atheist's
“ Name,) he open'd freely his Design, and ask'd him,
“ If Business would permit him to enter upon a Confe-
“ rence with *Eusebius*.

“ *Theomachus* received the Proposal with a Transport
“ of Joy, and told *Neander* he was infinitely oblig'd to
“ him, for offering so fair an Occasion of making Ac-
“ quaintance with a Man so much talked of: For (con-
“ tinued he) I have often heard great Commendations
“ both of his Vertue and Learning, and shall by this
“ Interview be able to judge, whether his Merits equal
“ his Fame. Besides, the Greatness of my Adversary
“ will secure my Credit, though Fortune declare against
“ me. *Neander*, after some mutual Compliments, re-
“ turned to his Lodgings, with a Resolution to mind
“ *Theomachus* of his Promise the next Morning.



The End of the First PART.

A
Supplement
To the FIRST PART.
OF THE
Gentleman Instructed ;
With a Word to the
LADIES.

Written for the
INSTRUCTION of the YOUNG
NOBILITY of both SEXES.

LONDON:
Printed in the YEAR, 1723.

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L O N D O N :

Printed in the Year 1733.



THE
PUBLISHER
TO THE
LADIES and GENTLEMEN.

Ladies and Gentlemen,



Tho' it be not in the Power of Man to write so nicely, as to leave the Criticks nothing to refine upon; yet there are some, whose Performances come nigher up to it, and hit much better with the Goû of the Times, than others. Among these we may presume to reckon The first Part of the Gentleman Instructed; which was scarce well set out, before it was at the End of its first Edition; and having run the second with the same Success, in the third it was deservedly took up into a Dedication; in which as it gain'd no little on Account of the honourable Person it was presented to; so it received no small Advantage from the ingenious Remarks of the Dedicator; whose Elogiums are so well thought, his Thoughts so well express'd, and his Expressions so well put together, that tho' the Work it self were of no Value, yet one would buy the Book for the Dedication.

It was the Author's Desire of being unknown, which made him willing to pass for being dead; but this Supplement, which is the genuine Off-spring of the same Pen, has too much of him in it, not to convince the World he is still alive; and whoever reads the second Part, will find there such a Harmony of Thought and Expression with the first, that if the Author had been dead, one would almost conclude him risen again to write it. In a Word, he is certainly alive; and 'tis hoped his growing Esteem will encourage him to oblige the Publick with many such deserving Pieces.

His Design in this is to instruct the Nobility of both Sexes in their Duty; and to chalk out the surest and shortest Way to Content in this World, and the Glory in the next. This is without doubt an advantageous Discovery, which so nearly concerns you, that I hope you will take the Proposals into Consideration. And methinks the Author so handsomely reconciles Greatness to Goodness, and all the Prerogatives of Quality to the Precepts of the Gospel; that you must either have forfeited Reason, or have bid adieu to Religion, if you refuse to practice the Method he prescribes: For who but Fools and Atheists, will resign all Pretensions to a future Bliss, for any temporal Enjoyment; when he may live great here, and happy hereafter?

Ladies, Soldiers, and Courtiers, will find here the Causes of their Miscarriages, and the Remedies: And if a bare exposing of your Failures over-heat the Spleen, and awaken Indignation; surely the Gentleman's Antidote will lay these unjust Resentments; and persuade you to acknowledge, that he had been less charitable, if he had been more indulgent.



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SUPPLEMENT

TO

*The First Part of the Gentleman
Instructed, &c.*

DIALOGUE I.

The Cause of the following DIALOGUES.



USEBIUS prepar'd for the Rendezvous, and resolv'd to attack the Atheist next Day: But an unforeseen Accident deferr'd the Meeting.

A Club of young Blades that Evening filed off from the Play-house, to storm some Bottles of Champagne. *Eleutherius* led on the Brigade, and march'd at the Head of the Battalian. And indeed he was compleatly equipt for the Adventure. His Purse was arm'd with Silver, and his Conscience with Steel. They attack'd the Enemy with Courage, and bore on with Resolution. All protested against Quarter, (as brave *Friburgen* did at *Cremona*) and so resolv'd to stand till they fell in the Enterprize.

But if the Assailants did Execution, Champagne did more: It tilted at the Head, and made directly at the Brain. One drop'd under the Table, an *Huzza* waited upon him to the Ground; and *Morpheus* step'd in to play the Surgeon.

The Misfortune of one breaths Vigour into the other; they carry on manfully the Attack: Their Heads run round with the Glasses; their Tongues ride Post; their Wits are Jaded; and Reason is distanc'd. Brutes could not talk better, nor Men worse: Like Skippers in a Storm, they rather hallow'd than spoke; scarce one heard his Neighbour, and not one understood him: So that Noise stood for Sense, and every one pass'd for a Virtuoso, because all play'd the Fool to Extravagance.

The Subject of their Heat was no less surprising than the Management of it; and both ridiculous to Amazement. *Sorrel* (cries one with an Oath) is the most compleat Nag in *England*; and then he threw among the Company such a Bedrol of Jocky-jargon, that one would think he had swept the Stable seven Years, or served a Prenticeship to a Farrier. From Terms of Arts he goes on to a Lesson of Proportion. He dissects the Animal; and flings the Anatomy on the Table; then he flourishes on his Feats, and swears he is famous in the Journal of *New-Market*. Nay, I am told, the Gentleman protested, *Sorrel* was as well born as himself; that in a collateral Line he touched the greater *Bucephalus*, and was Cousen once remov'd to *Caligula's* Consul.

Wine had heated the Companies Blood; but this short Panegyrick inflam'd it. They could not agree to *Sorrel's* Atchievements, nor suffer him to monopolize the Perfections of his Species; every Man stood up in Defence of his own *Rosnanre*, and maintain'd his just Prerogatives with Heat and Clamour. But whilst the Dispute ran high, their Wits sunk low with the Bottles; Sense slumber'd, and Reason almost fell into a Lethargy.

From the Stable they trip over to the Kennel, and leave Horses to philosophize on Hounds. They follow the Chace with Tumult; one would have taken 'em for a Pack of Beagles on the Scent, but that they open'd louder. All this while the Glasses circle, Reason ebbs, Extravagance flows, and Mirth flies out into Madness.

And now our Gallants were handsomely equip'd for any Villany. Champaigne had fired their Blood, intoxicated Reason, and drowned Shame. They fell upon their Maker without Fear, without Scruple. Some worry his Justice, whilst others buffoon his Mercy. The Juice of the Grape had swell'd these petty Pigmies into daring Gyants. Who canonaded Heaven, and defied the Omnipotent. Indeed their Drunkenness made some Attonement for their Blasphemies: But after all, it's a sad Case, when a Man is better for being transform'd into a Beast, and less foolish for having lost his Wits.

One protested against all Religions but that of *Epicure*: Against all Heavens but that of *Mahomet*: And against all Hells but want of Champaigne or Canary. Another would not receive the Lord's Prayer without an Amendment. To petition for Bread (said he) has more of the Beggar, than of the Gentleman; and suits better with the Poor of the Parish, than with the Lord of the *Mannor*. Let us at least (said he) tack to daily Bread, one Bottle of Burgundy. The Motion met with Applause: Every one follow'd the Proposal with a Comment ten times more outrageous than the Text. They rioted on: Impiety and the most rampart Insolence past for the most refined Wit. Nay to screw Outrage to the highest Point, Oh says one, give me *Religio Medici*, this Religion at large is a healing Profession: It reconciles the Cross with the Crescent, and strikes an Alliance between the Son of *Mary*, and the Son of *Abdala*. Thus is the Gospel deliver'd up to the Rabble, and a petty theistical Pamphlet lock'd up in the Ark. Our Saviour's Doctrine must give place to the Visions of an irreligious Quack, more fit to gaze upon Urinals, than to talk of Religion.

Had their Discourse been innocent, their Madness had been diverting: But to hear Christians turn God into farce, and Religion into Romance; revile Sanctity, and play with Justice, is monstrous and provoking. For what can be more amazingly flagitious, than to make God the Subject of our Sport, and the Gospel of our Diversion? Than to throw the most august and the most tri-
ng Things into the same Composition? And to blend Majesty and Omnipotence with Laughter and Frenzy?

The Proverb says, *Who murthereth when he is drunk, must hang for it when he is sober.* I would have it pass into a standing Law, and take in Blasphemers. The Fear of a Red-hot Iron might possibly put 'em in Mind of Fire and Brimstone, and the Dread of passing for stigmatiz'd Villains in this World, might scare 'em into an Apprehension of living eternally Reprobates in the next.

By this time *Eleutherius* had seiz'd on the Chair, and began to hold forth on the Text of *ede, bibe.* He was a Libertine at full Growth, a Latitudinarian in Principle, and by Consequence an Atheist in Practice. *Epicure* was his Casuist, and *Hobbs* his Divine.

To your Arms Gentlemen (bawls he) the Enemy has taken the Field, and advances to beat up our Quarters. Our Privileges gasp, and our great Prerogative lies bleeding. Nothing but Resolution can retrieve 'em.

The Company gaz'd at this unexpected *Exordium.* Some cry'd out Thieves, others a *French* Invasion; but most concluded, the *Monsieurs* could scarce land without Vessels; unless they follow'd the Road of the *Compostella* Pilgrims, or press some Teems of *Domingo's* Ganzas. But the Orator perceiving the Surprise soon laid their Fright, and calm'd their Fear. Gentlemen (continued he) our Enemies are Domestick, not Foreign; and they prepare Chains for our Consciences, not for our Bodies. In a Word, they preach up Vertue, and cant down Pleasure; entail Heaven on the one, and Hell on the other.

Yet did they confine this Obligation of self-denial to the Clergy, or the Sex, I would sit down and only smile at the Imposture. But alas! they even strike at our unquestionable Prerogative, and bring Gentlemen within the Lash of the Statute. We must forsooth fling up our Claim to Heaven, unless we starve in the Face of Plenty. We shall cry out in the next World for Water to cool our parch'd Tongues, if we bath 'em with *Burgundy* in this. These new coin'd Tenets are set on Foot, and abetted in *London*, nay, in the very Sight of the Play-house and the Tavern.

I met this Morning one *Eusebius*, the grand Patriarch of these dangerous Morals: His Person seems as orthodox as his Doctrine, and his Mind no less Heterodox than his Principles: He is a Compound of *Jew* and *Infidel*, *Pharisee* on the one side, and *Stoick* on the other.

His Gate is as grave as the old Duke of *Alva's*, and as starch'd as that of his Majesty of *Pegu*: But his Tongue rides Post, and is a kind of *Motus perpetuus*; and like old *Diogenes*, or *Timon*, is always upon the Satyr. In fine, I took the Man for Penance in Person, and Mortification in *Querpo*; for a meer Mummy pickled in Myrrh, and baked in Bitumen. Gentlemen (cries he) must low Appetite, baulk Sense, and curb Nature: They must war upon the Flesh, repress its Sallies, and diet it into Obedience: They must be humble in Grandeur, poor in Wealth, and meek in spight of Provocation: They must melt down their Swords into Crosses, and turn their fine Holland Shirts into Sackcloth. Is not this to lay us on our Backs? To break down the Inclosure between Quality and Peasantry? and to call in our Parents? Drudgery is the Portion of Clowns, Pleasure the Inheritance of Gentlemen: I could not indeed confute his Sophisms with Reason, but will by Practice. And if I am not mistaken, one Fact weighs more than a thousand Speculations. Let us strangle this new born Brat in the Cradle. *Principiis obsta* is a nice Maxim: A Spark contemn'd breaks often into a Flame. New Errors are as highly received into our Island, as new Fashions, and we are just as constant to our Principles, as to our Amours.

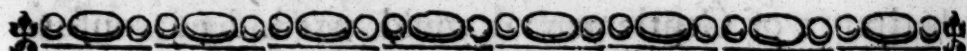
The Harangue was received with Applause, and all voted a Remedy. Some would silence *Eusebius* with a Bastinado, and others with Reason. They pitch'd upon the last Opinion as more civil, and less dangerous.

An Interview is resolv'd. But who will take up the Cudgels and close with the Enemy? *Eleutherius* found no Inclination to measure Weapons with a victorious Foe. The first Engagement had cool'd his Appetite. He had shot all his Ammunition, and like our German Allies, expected a Bill of Exchange to furnish his Magazine with new Provision.

The Expedition (says one of the Company) is of too great Consequence to be committed to *Eleutherius's* Conduct; he has been once fool'd, and a second Attempt ill managed may give an entire Overthrow to our Cause. To be foil'd and foil'd (says another with a Smile) may pass for synonymous in his Case; the Sense comes as near as the Letters, and the Signification of either may equally be apply'd to him.

Eleutherius was surpriz'd at the Glance, and the Sarcasm call'd for a Blush; but Wine prevented the Confusion; for it having taken Possession of his Cheeks, they could admit no other Colour; though to speak Truth, *Eleutherius* had a great Command over his Blood, and was within an Ace, as much Master of his Face as of his Conscience.

However, he protested against the Calumny, yet with too much Heat to be innocent; the Wine had warm'd his Courage, but this set it on Fire. The Consult had ended in a Civil War, had not one of the Company interpos'd, and kept the Peace between his Majesties Subjects. Nay, he undertook the Command of the Expedition: So that having provided for the Encounter, they reel'd to their Lodgings, tho' some took up in the Kennel.



DIALOGUE II.

A Prosecution of the same Subject.

WHilst *Eleutherius* prepar'd against *Eusebius* on the one side, his Lady (whom I call *Emilia*) muster'd Troops on the other. Yesterday's Discourse lay hard on her Ladyship's Stomach. The Gentlewoman was downright Crop-sick, and nothing but Revenge was able to carry off the Humour. She had been so inured to Compliments, that she could not digest *Eusebius's* Freedom. Flattery had placed her among the Beauties, and Favour voted her a Wit. She was fond of the Promotion, and by an innate Pride, common to the Sex, ascribed the whole Preferment to Merit, and nothing to Courtesy. Now this Lady so gawdy in Conceit, could not endure to receive Reproof for Incense, nor unpalatable Truths for fawning Courtship. She dreaded a sincere Tongue no less than a true Glass, and would no more suffer her Conduct to be question'd, than her Complexion. *Eusebius* indeed had handled her Ladyship without Ceremony, but her Disease was mortal: Like an honest Surgeon, he would not spare the Saw to flatter the Patient. However, he step'd not over the Rules of Breeding, but kept

kept within the Bounds of Decency: But he could not applaud her Follies, nor canonize her Irregularities. She was wedded to the World. He told her she embrac'd a Shadow, that once would betray her Hopes, and thwart her Expectation with Disappointment: That she might retrieve her Folly by a timely Divorce: But that Dila-tory Put-offs are generally follow'd by an untimely Re-pentance. *Eusebius* might have expected from her Court-breeding, a civil Return for so charitable a *Caveat*. *Emilia* was in the Wrong, but she would not be set Right. She posted to Hell, yet would needs be told she took the high Way to Heaven: And because the good old Gentleman postponed her Favour to her Happiness, and refused to purchase her *bonnes graces* at the Expence of her Soul, she flew into a Fury, and repaid his Charity with Satyr and Declamation. Nay, some affirm *Passion* had almost stop'd Respiration, and that she had certainly expired of a Syncop, had she not taken Coach and thrown off the stifling Humour in the Bosoms of a Female *Juncto*, with whom she pass'd the Evening.

Emilia found the Ladies in a Commotion, their Con-versation was clamorous, and too earnest to be indiffe-rent. Indeed a kind of South-East Wind had ruffled their Temper, and blown their Tongues into Disorder. The *French* Packet-boat brought over the Alarm, and *Lucia* (so I call the Lady) paid the Post a Shilling for the Mor-tification. To be short, this Gentlewoman entertain'd an Envoy at the *French* Court, to give Intelligence how Modes ebb'd and flow'd; when they first appear'd; when like to expire; which were more proper for Forty, which for Sixteen; which for a rising, which for a setting Beau-ty. She received fresh Advice, that the *French* King had forbid the wearing of Gold Lace, and that all be-low a Countess lay under the Prohibition; that he had clip'd Commodes, and taken the Sex a Story lower; the the Dutchess of *Burgundy* immediately undress'd, and appear'd in a *Fontange* of the new Standard; that his Majesty had a Design against Top-knots; and had pass'd in Counsel an Act against the Transportation of *Washes* and *Pomatus*.

This unexpected Intelligence wrought like *Diaturbith cum Rhea*, *Passion* flush'd in their Faces, and burst out of their Mouths. The *Grand Lewis* was commanded to the Bar,

Bar, and pronounced guilty of a high Misdemeanour; he was handled by this Female Bench as chavaleerly, as the *Salamanca* Doctor by Sir George Jefferies; and his exorbitant Power received more Lashes in an Hour, than at the *Hague*, or *Vienna*, in a Twelve-month.

The Son (says one) in all his Voyages never saw a more imperious Prince; he drives at universal Monarchy, his Desires out-stretch his Dominions, nothing is able to glut his Ambition, but the Slavery of *Europe*; he has besieged Towns these threescore Years, now he falls fowl upon Fashions, and hectors at the Toylet as he huffs in the Field.

This is (continued another) an Inroad upon our Privilege, and a manifest Invasion of our Right; to model Dresses is the chief Branch of our Prerogative; nay, it's our proper Chattel; in a word, it's an Employment entailed on our Sex.

Indeed I am told (says a third) *French* Laws reach not our Island; they are contraband here no less than their Wines; but though there be no Commerce of Trade, there is of Modes: We are always *French* without, tho' seldom within; and though we hate their Soldiers, we dote on their Taylors and Sempstresses. We should therefore see the Waiters, and sieze on the reform'd Ware at the landing; nay, and indict the Seamen upon the Statute of no Commerce with *France*.

Emelia expected a *Queve* with Impatience, and now she thought to ease her Mind, and to lay open the Cause of her Chagrin to the Company. Alas! (said she) our Privileges are not only rifled at *Paris*, they are clip'd at *London*: The distinguishing Marks of Birth and Title are defaced; and the Maid stands on the same Level with my Lady: Then she entertain'd the Club with the Dialogue between her self and *Eusebius*, and follow'd the Text with an exasperating Comment: Nay, she misrepresented the Discourse to fit it for Satyr, and foisted in some grating Expressions to provoke Resentment: The Harangue tired the Audience, and almost threw a Leath of Ladies into Fits. They lost Patience, and even Breeding: Passion siezed on Reason, and Revenge gave Liberty to the Tongue. When Spight and Impotence meet, nothing is more clamorous and extravagant.

But

But above all *Emilia* was remarkable; Nature had favoured her with a voluble Tongue; and her mercurial Temper heated with Revenge, improved its Motion to Admiration: So that it run at the rate of ten Miles an Hour, and lash'd *Eusebius* without Mercy or Interruption. They leave Monsieur at *Versailles* to chastise *Eusebius* at *London*: He was to be brought upon his Knees first, and then to do Penance before the Congregation: But these severe Resolutions were the Effect of the first Heat. Time cool'd their Fury, and wrought them into Terms of a more reasonable Satisfaction. They thought therefore fit to compound with the Gentleman upon these Articles. 1. That he craved Pardon of the Ladies, for affronting their Character in the Person of *Emilia*. 2. That he acknowledg'd the Doctrine he had advanc'd was Heterodox; rather spoken out of Inadvertance than Malice, and more to carry on Discourse, than to impose an Obligation. 3. That these Words of our Saviour, *be perfect*, rather intimate a Counsel than a Command: And that they concern neither the Dutches, Countesses, nor Gentlewoman. 4. That the foresaid Persons are exempt from the Cumbrances of the Gospel, and lie under no Law but of their Pleasure. *Emilia* and *Lucia* drew up these Conditions, and were deputed by the *Juncto* to present them to *Eusebius*. In the mean time the good Man went to Bed, never dreaming of their Designs; and ignorant of the Work these two Cabals had cut him out for the next Day's Employment.



D I A L O G U E III.

Eusebius lays open the irregular Conduct of Ladies.

EMilia and *Lucia* drove away betimes the next Morning to *Eusebius's* Lodging. They generously for once broke their Sleep to execute their Commission; and expos'd their Health to the Morning Vapours, for the common Concern of the Sex. *Eusebius* started at the Earliness of the Visit, and began to suspect this unusual Appearance (like monstrous Births) portended a Turn of State; or threatned Inundation, or Earthquakes: To
rise

rise by Candlelight, and to set out before the Sun, is not only a Breach of Custom, but a Violation of the Ceremonial of Ladies; universally they must not begin their Journeys till *Phæbus* has almost ended his, nor lay down to sleep, till he prepares to rise. However, *Eusebius* remembered his Duty in the Height of his Surprize, and received the Deputies with a Respect. He would fain have regaled them a Dish of Chocolate, but they refused the Offer: For indeed they had already by way of Precaution, armed themselves against the *Serena* with a Caudle.

Emilia open'd her Commission, and read her Credentials; then, I am sent (said she) by a select Committee of Ladies to require Satisfaction. You are, Sir, (I presume, continu'd she) too guilty to deny the Charge, and too much a Gentleman not to ask our Pardon.

Eusebius could scarce keep Countenance at this unexpected Harangue; and indeed had not her Ladyship wept like *April*, he might have turn'd the Scene into Farce and Comedy. Indeed she wept so heartily, one would have thought her favourite Lapdog lay gasping, or that some *American* Planter had kidnap'd the little Animal, to transplant the *Species* into *Virginia*. It was not Repentance for her Sins melted her Heart, and drew down these plentiful Showers: No, no, Vexation alone open'd the Floodgates of her Eyes, and cast her into this whimpering Distemper. *Eusebius* (as I said) had catechised her Ladyship, and she took his Freedom in Dudgeon: She mistook his Charity for Disrespect, and thought her self affronted, because he pay'd less Respect to her Follies, than to her Person; for great Ladies expect Flattery even for those Extravagances for which they are in danger of suffering Fire and Brimstone hereafter. Now the very Sight of *Eusebius* boil'd up her Resentment to the Brim, and because it found not an easy Issue through the Tongue, it broke a Passage through the Eyes.

Eusebius seeing *Emilia* in this Situation, thought open Raillery unseasonable, and yet he could not resolve to be serious. He took therefore a Mean, and between Earnest and Jest; you are, Madam, I perceive, said he, a publick Minister; and this Lady is your *Adjoint*. Why was not I advertiz'd of your coming; I might have prepar'd the *Sopha*, or borrow'd his Majesty's Coaches to

conduct you to Audience. But seeing you are pleas'd to appear *Incognito*, let my Ignorance apologize for this poor Reception.

You tell me, I am guilty of *Leze Majesty* against *Ladies*; certainly a Crime of so monstrous a Size would flie in my Face, unless my Memory were short, or my Conscience harden'd. Yet though Age hath not wore out the one, nor my Morals seered the other, I am not conscious of the Trespass. No, I respect their Quality, and have a Regard for their Persons, when attended by Merit, and waited on by Vertue; but when I find no Fund of Excellency, but the feminine Gender; a dignified Husband, or a gawdy Manto, I reserve my Esteem for more deserving Objects.

Luc. How, Sir! Have you the Confidence to plead not guilty before *Emilia*? Refresh your Memory, cast a Reflection upon Yesterday's Conversation! Was it genteel? Was it managed by the strict Rules of *Decorum*? You forgot her Station and your own.

Enseb. You must not wonder, Madam, if I deny the Indictment; the Law allows it to Criminals, it's the Stile of the Court. Now, I suppose, you will not refuse me the Privilege of the Bar. But however, I had, I confess, the Honour to argue a Point with *Emilia*, and the Misfortune to displease her. Yet the Offence was merely personal, it reach'd not the Court, much less the whole Sex. I presume every Woman is not *Legion*. And that Affronts, like Diseases, are not propagated by Sympathy.

Luc. You struck and wounded the whole Sex through *Emilia's* Side. Did you not preach up Vertue, not only as an Ornament to Quality, but as a strict Obligation? Did you not lampoon our Conduct, and expose our Behaviour?

Enseb. I told *Emilia* Vertue was her Duty, and I have Scripture for my Warrant. Pray fly in the Face of the Holy Ghost, and bring in an Action of *Scandalum magnanimum* against our blessed Saviour. He pinches, I assure you, upon Grandeur and Title, and values more a Dairy-maid with Vertue, than a Princess without it. I ventured also to compare the Practice of Ladies with their Duty; and after a serious Application, I found the one bore no Proportion with the other. They jar like Contraries, and can no more be reconcil'd than Contradictions.

ries. If I arraign the Expresses of some, 'twas only to reform them. Charity guided my Tongue, not Satyr. In fine, I endeavour'd to correct their Failings, without outraging their Persons, or insulting their Quality. Now pray Ladies, Where is the Harm? Is it not true, That God created the World for Man, and Man for himself? And are not Ladies comprehended in this general End of the Creation? Will they resign all Claim to Heaven? Or shake off the Yoke of Dependance? Are they not therefore oblig'd to serve God both out of Interest and Duty? Is not this the fundamental Stone of our Religion? The Capital Maxim of the Gospel? The whole Load of Christian Promises and Precepts lean on this Basis. And as God has observed no Mean in his Favours to us, so he has put no Bounds to our Obligation. *Love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart.* This is Scripture Ladies: It's not only God's Word, but his Command; and I find no where that the topping Females lie without the Pale of the Precept: But perhaps you are better read in *Shakespeare*, than Revelation.

Luc. God be thank'd, Sir, we know the Catechism. Do you suppose we receiv'd our Education in the Wilds of *America*?

Enseb. I question not your Knowledge: It's hard to overlook a Truth God has stamp'd within us. That we were made to serve God is the first Lesson we learn: But by Misfortune we seldom look behind the Principle: We never take into Consideration the Consequences: For if it be true you were merely created for his Service and Glory, every Action that warps from this Point is extraneous and irregular: It's a Violation of your Duty, and carries you from the End of your Creation. Be pleas'd to survey your Thoughts and Desires; calculate your Words and Actions; and then tell me, Whether they hanker'd not more after your Satisfaction, than God's Service? Whether they aim'd not more at the obliging of Sense, than at the Discharge of your Duty? And yet you believe you were placed in this World to save your Soul: That your only Business is to save it: That though you gain the Universe, you lose all unless you save it: Permit me to disbelieve you in this Particular, or to conclude your Reason to be disorder'd.

Emil

Emil. Take your Choice, Judgments work no Alteration in this: You will scarce think us out of Christianity; nor judge us into *Bedlam*: But pray, What unfortunate Constellation reign'd at our Births? What fatal Influence dubb'd us Fools or Infidels? The Dilemma is unkind: I might add ungenteel. Infidelity in a reform'd Nation has something of the Monster: And Folly every where much of the Beast. Does our Discourse betray any Distemper of the Head? Or our Practice any Symptoms of a depraved Will?

Enseb. Should you see a Man (whilst his Estate lay gasping) saunter from the Play-House to the Tavern; sleep till Ten in the Morning, and revel till Twelve at Night: Bastinado his Lawyers, and challenge his Judge to a Duel, would you not conclude this Gentleman valued Indigence above an Estate? That he was fond of Poverty? Or compleatly rigged out for a Journey to *More-Fields*?

Emil. We should questionless infer, he had a Mind to disburthen himself of the Incumbrance of Lands; and to try the Charity of the Congregation. But pray parallel not our Behaviour to this Coxcomb's Extravagance.

Enseb. By no means; for how can I compare Things that have no Proportion, or Analogy? This Coxcomb's Folly can only throw him into Poverty, and those troublesome Sequels that wait on Indigence, light Dinners and foul Linnen: and yet this Misfortune may by Care and Industry be retrieved, and must end. But Ladies must expect more dismal Consequences of their Negligence: For Heaven lost is never found, and Hell Flames once lighted are never extinguished.

Luc. Nay, now we are fallen on the Topick of Eternity, we shall never end. You are chop'd upon the Text of Pedants, upon the common Theme of Cant. You intend to fright us into Bigotry, and to scare us into Slavery. We know God has prepar'd a Heaven for his friends, and a Hell for his Enemies, and that both are everlasting; but we know also, whilst we do no Harm, we incur no Guilt, and by consequence no Punishment.

Enseb. Hell indeed is a very common Place, the Road to it is plain, and always crowded, so that it's well Peopled: Nay, and the Citizens, like those of old *Rome*, are a great part Lords, Knights, and Ladies; and the Privilege

vilege of the Corporation runs for Eternity. You are acquainted (you tell me) with this Truth; however, I take the Freedom to rub up your Memory, and I think a Touch of it sometimes, tho' it be only in Glance and Cypher, is seasonable: For I confess a Doubt has hung cruelly in my Head, Whether the Knowledge of our First-rate Mortals of both Sexes reach'd the Center? I have spent some Reflections upon their Conduct, and find Hell in their Practice, but not in their Belief. I have compared with Grief, Pagan *Rome* with Christian *London*, and read in the Practice of this, the Infidelity of the other. Their Actions are so uniform, one must conclude their Expectations are the same; and that our *English* Hopes and Fears, are confined wholly to the Present, as well as the *Romans*. For, in fine, these Pagan Ladies were litter'd to *Campus Martius*, ours are coach'd to *Hide-Park*; if they sheer'd off to the Theatre, ours drive home by the *Play-House*; they had their Balls, we are not behind hand in this Diversion. The *Roman* Ladies hung Provinces in their Ears, and carried the Price of Kingdoms on their Backs; and their Vanity swell'd to that Excess, that nothing but a Decree of the Senate, was able to put Bounds to its Extravagance. Indeed our Banks are less furnish'd than those of *Rome*; and so our *English* Vices must be content with less Equipage: We are not attended by a Train of Slaves, nor carried on the Shoulders of *Gauls*, or *Germans*; our Pendants and Necklaces may want some *Caracts* of the ancient Bravery, but generally they weigh more than our Lands, and Lordships; they eat up our Glebe, and prey upon our very Titles. So that though our Vanity has less Pomp and State, it's attended by more Folly.

I confess *Venus* and *Cupid* have no Altars in our Churches, yet tho' they are clear of Idols, Idolatry goes on: Like *Michas* we worship these little Prostitutes at Home with Epods and Theraphim, and turn the whole Year into a *Lupercalia*: We build, I mean, to this Procurer and Pander, Altars in our Hearts, out of the reach of Parliament or Church-wardens; and sacrifice (not Doves but all our Thoughts, Desires, and Actions, to those lewd Divinities. For pray consider, Do not Love Intrigues take up the Time of Christians, as well as of the old Pagans. And are they not carried on with as much Heat and

remony

emony at *London* as at *Rome*? Can History instance one Fact of Incontinence that we have not adopted by Practice? Nay, the Copies we draw out-do the Originals; and we blush as little at those Crimes our Religion condemns to Fire and Brimstone, as the Pagans at those Idolatry placed in Heaven.

Now, who can draw any other Conclusion from such a Resemblance of Practice, but a Resemblance of Belief? And that *England* tho' Christian without, is no less Pagan within than *America*? For what is the Difference, but that our Name is better, and our Vices worse. I have heard that a *Japonese*, by the Instruction of a Divine, conceived a high Idea of the Christian Religion; but all the Rhetorick of the Preacher was unable to bring him over till he had taken a Journey into *Europe*. With the first fair Wind he set Sail for *Goa*, he doubles the *Cape of Good Hope*, and Lands at *Lisbon*; he travels over *Europe*; he examines the Behaviour and Employments of Christians, he compares their Lives with their Belief; the Looseness of their Actions with the Severity of their Precepts; and finding no Proportion between the Doctrine and the Practice, he concluded Christianity was Mummery and Romance: That we did not believe in *Europe*, what we preach'd in *India*; and, in fine, that Christianity was rather a Mystery of Iniquity than of Godliness. For he could not conceive it possible for so many Millions to run counter to the Laws of their Profession, and to combine to confute by an universal Practice all the Articles of their Creed. Can Men (said he) who profess a Gospel of Love and Amity, outrage their Brethren, and welter in the Blood of their nearest Relations? Can Men who are bid to lay up all their Treasure in Heaven, place their whole Concerns upon Earth? Can they take up here, as if they were never to remove, and settle with Satisfaction in the very Place of their Exile? Can Men believe Christ suffered for their Sins, and yet crucify him in their Oaths? Or that God will avenge Crimes, and yet commit the blackest without horror, or even Scruple? Can they believe Lust is forbid, and at the same time make it their Business to exalt Flesh, and whip on the Passions to Excesses, even beyond their natural Inclination? To plunge into Debaucheries less upon Appetite, than by way of Exploit and Gallantry?

Gallantry? This poor Idolater could not conceive how Christians Conduct could vary so prodigiously from their Judgments: How their Law could teach Morality, and their Actions breath Impiety. And so return'd into his Country with this Persuasion, that our Religion was all Artifice, all Criminal, or all Christians Infidels.

Emil. Well Scolding is a Song of two Parts; if you take one, I may be tempted to take the other. Providence spoil'd a good Surgeon to make an ill Gentleman. Your Genius lies so to Dissection, I believe you take as much Pleasure in the cutting up of a Fault, or in reading upon the Soars of your Neighbour, as a Doctor of the College in the anatomizing of a Malefactor taken from the Gibbet. Take your way, lampoon the whole Race of Christians, and make a Satyr upon the Nation. You have assumed the Office of Censor-General, and what will you gain but Enemies and Reproof?

Luc. His Investive, Madam, reaches not us, we do no harm; our Conduct is Innocent, and our Behaviour belies not our Profession.

Euseb. I am not disposed to libel Ladies, nor to burlesque Mankind. But I am concern'd in earnest, to see People in spite of all Sollicitation to be happy, run headlong like crown'd Victims to their Ruin. To see Christians claim a Right to the vast Promises of our Redeemer, and at the same time to break through all the Principles that support the Title. You fix your Security upon this wretched Maxim, *I do no Harm*. Suppose it true; Will this ensure your Happiness?

You have certainly consider'd, *Matth. 25*. You have read the Parable of a Master, who call'd his Servant to Account for a Talent. Be pleas'd upon my Recommendation to turn once more to the Place: It seems design'd for your Instruction; weigh the Drift, and stop at every Circumstance. This Man deliver'd his Servant a Talent, with a Command to lay it out at Interest: But reflecting on the one side, perchance that the Bank was sunk, and the Security questionable; and on the other, that his Master was severe and exacting, he thought it a piece of Policy to secure the Capital; and restor'd it immediately at his Return. But the Master treats the Man with Heat and Out-rage. *Ill and idle Servant*. He receives the Talent with Indignation, he coops him up in

Goal;

Goal; and then condemns him to weeping and gnashing of Teeth. Now this poor Wretch was neither Thief nor Murtherer; he neither wasted his Lord's Goods, nor alienated 'em. It's true, he laid not out the Money to Interest; but he secured the Principal: And if he did no Good, he was charged with no Harm. Notwithstanding this Plea brought him not off; he was found guilty of Negligence and Idleness, and received both Sentence and Punishment.

So that, Ladies, the very Ground of your Security was the Cause of his Damnation. He was unprofitable, but not wicked; he encreased not his Master's Stock, nor did he embezel it. You pretend you do no Harm, but confess you do no Good; you do not serve God, and will not offend him. If this pretence did not protect the Steward, nor stave off the Sentence, why shall it plead harder for you; unless perchance the Female Sex has right to more Indulgence than the Male; or that God will have regard to Quality; or that the Court lies out of the Verge of his Jurisdiction?

But in good earnest, Ladies, *Do you no Harm?* Is it not Harm to wander from the Cradle to the Coffin in a Labyrinth of Amusements, either vain or childish? Is it *no Harm* to tire your self upon the Concerns of this World, without spending one Thought upon the Affairs of the other? Is it *no Harm* to play the Prodigals, to lavish those precious Moments of Time that compose your Lives upon Balls, Masks, and Dressing? Perchance Education has given you false Notions of Time; you are ignorant of its Value; you are perchance apter to look upon it as a Burthen, than a Favour, as a Drug that lies upon your Hands, than a Treasure. Suffer me to disabuse you.

Nothing is more valuable, nothing more precious than Time, every Moment is worth an Eternity; the Bliss of the Saints is but the Reward of Time well husbanded; and the Torments of the damned are the dismal Effects of Time misused. Do you comprehend the Value of Grace, or of the beatifical Vision? This Grace, this beatifical Vision are the Price of Time. The damned Souls can never soften God's Justice; tho' they weep eternally; tho' they groan eternally under the Weight of his Severity; and yet in one Moment of Time assisted by his Grace we may cancel the most flaming Sins, we may re-

new our Claim to Heaven, and return to his Favour. Happiness therefore and Misery, and both Eternal, depend on Time. Yet *you do no Harm* when you mispend it, nay, when you labour more to misapply it, than God requires to manage it to Advantage.

How many Wretches sulter in Flames without Pity, or Interruption? And yet they burn for the very Principle you maintain, that it's *no Harm* to trifle away Time. But, Ladies, Flames have restored 'em to their Wits, and brought them to a just Acknowledgment of their Error: They deplore their Mistake with fruitless Tears, and draw from their late Repentance no Lenitive but Despair. They cry louder for Time, than the unhappy *Dives* for Water, and prize a Moment, above the Waves of the Ocean. Would God expose Time to Sale, the Number of Chapmen would equal that of the Reprobates. How many Empires would *Alexander, Caesar, and Messaline* give up for one Hour? But alas ten thousand Worlds will not purchase a single Moment. Is it then *no Harm* to saunter away our Lives, and like Children duck and drake away a Treasure able to buy Paradise? In fine, Ladies, our Death-Bed Wishes that sue with such an Energy for a Moment's Reprieve, demonstrate Time has a real Value: For why should it appear so desirable, when the most gaudy Vanities of the World raise Contempt.

Emil. So, *Eusebins* has pronounced our Dooms; we are already damned in Effigy, nay, and all Mankind in *Emblem* and *Hieroglyphick*. Are you not afraid, Sir, of being torn to Peices by the Street-Infantry? Do you feel no Pangs of Compunction for such Anti-christian Assertions? I could no more Sleep with such a weighty Sin upon my Conscience, than I could breathe fifty Fathom under Water. What, nothing but Hell and Damnation for poor Mortals after a plentiful Redemption? But I suppose you stand off in Generals, and comprehend us not in your Sentence; for I thank God, I always have an Eye on the main Chance; I am at Peace within, and take Account of my Time.

Ensch. Mistake me not, Judicature is the Flower of God's Prerogative, he alone crowns the Vertue of the Righteous, and punishes the Crimes of the Ungodly. I have not survey'd the Region of Darkness, nor perus'd the Register of *Lutifer*, so that I am ignorant of the

Number

Number of the unfortunate, and unacquainted with their Persons ; yet certainly if Scripture be the Rule of Good and Evil, if it points at the Road that leads to Death, without straining the Law of Charity, I may pronounce the greatest part of our *Beans* and *Bells* are in a fair way to Damnation. For who steers by that Compass? Who follows that Guide? Nay, in Defiance of Self-Interest, Revelation, and Reason too, we cut upon all the Maxims of the Gospel, as if it were to be understood backwards, and that Vice stood for Vertue, Vertue for Vice, and Hell for Heaven. But it seems your Club is not like other People; your Consciences are serene, without Storm or Cloud, you enjoy within a sweet Spring, a gentle Calm, as if the *Halcyons* had built their Nests in your very Souls. You make not a false Step from *January* to *December*, every Thought is seraphick, every Motion more than Christian, every Moment of Time is managed with Thought and Consideration. It's pity Canonizations are out of Fashion in *England*, you might else stand fair for a place in the Calendar. But in good Earnest is your Conduct so irreproachable? Do you allow so much Time to God? Solittle to Vanity? Let us try (if you please) this Point by plain Fact: It deserves Attention.

Pray then, Ladies, what is the grand Occupation of the Day? Between eight and nine in comes my Ladies Woman to range in Order and Method all the little Trinkets of the Toylet. She chuckles together a whole Covy of Essences and Perfumes, she commands Combs to their Posts, Pomatums to theirs, Washes *a-la-mode* to theirs. Here is Contrivance in Folly, and Confusion in Order. One would take a Dressing-room for a Toy-lhop, or a Mercery of small Ware. Nay, I have heard it compar'd to an Army in *Array*, for the little Knicknacks stand in a military Posture; some are divided into Batallions; others into Squadrons; some make up the left, some the right Wing; and I have seen a *Corps de reserve* upon a Side-board ready for sudden Occasions. A *French* Glass *a-la-mode* commands in the *Corps de bataille*; at his Beck the Patch-boxes march, Powders and Essences advance, Combs enter upon Duty; and then on a sudden, *halt*, and now my Lady makes her *intrado*, and begins the great Work of the Day. She consults her Oracle the Glass upon the State of her Health and Beauty;

What Change since last Night, time has wrought in her Complexion, whether it carries on its Approaches with speed; or whether it draws near the *Glacis*, and when probably it may master the *Out-works*?

And now her Ladyship brandishes the Combs, and the Powders raise Clouds in the Apartment. She trims up the *Commode*, she places it ten times, unplaces it as often without being so fortunate as to hit upon the Critical Point. She models it to all Systems, but is pleas'd with none. For you must know some Ladies fancy a Vertical, others an Horizontal Situation; others Dress by the Northern Latitude, and others lower its Point to forty-five Degrees. At length she comes to the Patches: Here is Plea for Fancy, and Room for Invention, no wonder then if the Operation takes up Time, and calls for Study and Reflection; it's hard to resolve upon the Number, harder upon the Size, and much more easy to billet an Army, than to assign each Patch its proper Station. Twelve strikes before her Cheeks are inlaid, and her Face be checker'd *a-la-mode*. And when she has baited the Chambermaid, and stroaked her Lap-dog, in comes Dinner; down she sits not to eat, but to fret; one Dish is too high season'd, another too low; this is too sweet, that too sower; the Pigeons are too lean, the Pullets too fat; since her *Levee*, she only named God when she told the Cook, *God sends Meat, and the Devil sends Cooks*. Here is the great Concern of the Morning, this takes Madam's Thoughts, this runs away with her Care, and sweeps away with one half of the Day. Yet she does *no Harm*, she is thrifty of Time, she puts it to Account, these Hours (no doubt) are wisely employ'd; they are laid out to Advantage, and will fructify to a Miracle.

But now the Evening Employment calls upon her. She steps into the Coach, drives to the *Exchange* in the *Strand*; from thence to *Cheapside*, and at her Return strikes in at *Pater-noster-Row*. In one Place she learns new Fashions, here she cheapens Silks, there China Dishes, here Perfumes, there Pomatums. She coaches the Ware and leaves a Billet for the Reck'ning. Being cleared of Business, she's fit for Diversion. She posts therefore to the Park, where she supposes every one admires her. Some indeed are smitten with her Drapery, whilst others pity her Folly; but all agree, her Vanity outweighs her Judgment.

ment, that she is richer without than within, and that her Wit sparkles less than her glorious Equipage. She makes the Round, enquires who is come to Town; who has slipp'd aside into the Country; who is lately married; who lies in; and having discharged her Commission, and delivered her Errand, she rows Home by the Play-House; unless a Ball or a secret Assignment desire her Presence. This is a Ladies Life in Epitome, her Employment in Short-hand. One Days Work is the Copy of another, and one Year shews the Practice of forty.

And now, Ladies, which Action of the Day bids fair for Heaven? which calms your Conscience, and puts you out of Apprehension of a final Miscarriage? Which distinguishes the Christian from the Pagan? The Heir of Paradise from the Child of *Lucifer*? I fancy the *Chinese* Dames (who are Strangers to the Joys and Terrors, of the other World) take the Scheme of their Lives from the Plan of yours. They work by your Sample, and copy the European Original. They while away their Time upon Trifles; they dress and undress as you do; they idolize a little Body, that once must fall in the Grave, and repair with Artifice the ravage of the Age; they steer by the Impulse of Sense, and follow the Current of Inclination. Ease is the Object of their Wishes, and Vertue of their Aversion. If the Lives of Infidels and Christians carry such a Resemblance, I fear their Ends will bear the same Proportion; for how can they march on the same Road, and not arrive at the same Term?

Luc. Here is a Libel upon the Sex, and the Character is obliging; but the Picture is taken from Imagination, not from Life. It's a Dash at Random; an Essay of Wit to sport the Faculty, and to breath the Spleen. I perceive you seldom frequent the Church; for did you vouchsafe to make an Appearance there on the Lord's Day, you would see the Ladies in the Pews, as well as in the Park, or in the Boxes.

Euseb. I beg your Pardon, I had almost forgot the Sabbath Occupation. *Sunday* is a Day of Rest, and so Ladies stand Religiously to its Primitive Institution, i. e. they consecrate it to Sleep and Repose; it's a Day of Vacation too, and by consequence the most proper Season for Physick. I knew a Lady sick of a Chronical Distemper, that puzzled the Doctor, and threw the Apothe-

cary into Fits of Amazement. Its Symptoms were extraordinary, and its Accidents without President; she was in a perfect State of Health and Vigour all the Week, and always discompos'd on the Lord's Day; nay, I was inform'd she discern'd by the Beat of the Pulse a *Feast* from a *Feria*, without the help of *Poor Robin*. But pray, Madam, what Motive leads you to Church? Sometimes you appear to teach, sometimes to learn new Fashions; perchance also you have fail'd in the Return of a Visit, and nothing but an Apology in a Holy Place can atone for the Breach of a Ceremony so sacred. I take it for granted you disclaim the Quality of a Suppliant; why else do you disdain the Posture? Kneeling is indeed improper (I mean impertinent) for those who have no Inclination to pray: Nay, I suspect (without the Consent of King and Parliament) you have enacted to your selves the prophane Part of *Darius's Law*, of making no *Petition to God*.

Tell me ingenuously, do you not enter into the Church as *Caligula* did into the Temple, not to pray, but to receive Homage? Do you not fancy a Place on the Altar becomes your Ladyships better than Silver Candlesticks or Basons? I grant upon Occasions the Fame of a celebrated Preacher may decoy you into the Sanctuary, and so Curiosity subdues Sloath, and one Vice makes room for another; but then is Rhetorick runs away with your Attention, not his Morality; you hearken to Criticise or Applaud, not to Learn. In fine, you flock to the Pulpit as the *Romans* did to their *Rostra*, to hear Oratory, and to see Declamation, and thus you Coach back to your Lodgings. All these Sins you carry'd to the Sermon, besides a sufficient *Cargo* you overtook in the Streets, or pickt up in the Congregation.

And as in the Morning you sat down to laugh and chat with your Pew-Fellows; so after Dinner with the Heathenish Jews, *you rise to Play*, the Table-cloth is removed to make Place for the Cards. Did Gaming keep within the Pale of a mere Recreation, perchance a Set after the Evening Service might be tolerated. But alas! Libertinism and Avarice have given it the Freedom of the City; it's erected into a Company as well as the Society of Taylors and Haberdashers. In a word, 'tis become a Calling; nay, a laborious and servile one too. Ladies toil and drudge

Grudge at it Day and Night, they give up their Privilege to that Remission. Laws both humane and divine have provided for the basest Mechanicks: The very Sabbath is no Day of Rest and Relaxation to them; this Trade goes on, when all other Shops are shut, and (to confute the common Excuse, we do *no Harm*) sometimes at one sitting a Child's Portion is truckt for a swing on the Rack, which Lunaticks are pleas'd to call Diversion.

Luc. Well; and where is the Harm in all this?

Euseb. Nay, Madam, if this Failure be little in your Opinion, I fear your Conscience will appear less. What Harm to prophane the Church and the Sabbath too? Why, it's a Complication of Sacrilege and Insult; and do these Crimes stand for Cyphers in your Casuistry? They strike directly at your Maker, and almost imply Atheism by Illation; they wound your Neighbour also by Reflexion, and clash with Justice and Nature. For is not Justice violated, and Nature outraged, when you Card or Dice away a Labourer's Sallery, or a Child's Portion? Unless perchance our *English Proverb*, *The better Day the better Deed*, sanctifies the Action. Well I perceive the Sex is impeccable, unless it Vaults over the two Tables of the Decalogue together, or swallows Sins like Carroway Comfits, by the Dozen.

The Ladies sate all this while upon the Tenters, and receiv'd the Mercurial, as they swallow Pills, with wry Faces in abundance; they broke off the Homily a hundred Times, and as often sprinkled the Discourse with Expostulation, their Passion flow'd too fast to be pent in; they were neither able to keep Silence, nor to speak to the purpose; and Anger that loos'd their Tongue, fettered their Reason. But *Eusebius* endeavoured to sooth 'em to some Terms of Moderation; he desir'd their Attention for a Moment, with Assurance they should have time to interpose; He protested that he intended Instruction, not Satyr; that he honoured the Sex, but fawn'd not on their Vices. But the Comment upon their *Sunday Behaviour* spoil'd all, he might as well have reason'd down a Hurricane, or argued the Cholerick Ocean into a Calm, to Complement these Females into Silence. Their Retirement had taken Fire, and all their Passion boil'd over with Noise and Tumult. In fine, Impatience stept into the Coach-box, and drove their Ladyships beyond the Bounds

Bounds of Decency. *Eusebius* had read that Non-resistance tames Fury, whilst Opposition made it; that like Capricious Horses, it runs faster when you draw in, than when you loose the Reins: He therefore gave Way to their Sallies, and receiv'd some Discharges of Chase-shot. At length the Humour was drain'd, and the Tempest ended in Serenity. And as Topers drink themselves sober, so these Ladies talked away Impatience, and vex'd themselves into a good Humour.

The Storm being over, Ladies, (continued *Eusebius*,) can such a Conduct stand with the Belief of an Eternity? Can Women throw Time away with so little Caution, who are persuaded their *All* depends upon the Management of it? Can they put any Stress upon the Expectation of future Happiness, who perch with so much Eagerness upon present Satisfaction? You would do well, to face your Practice with your Profession; to balance what you receive in Hand, with what you expect in Reversion; to run up to your Baptism and recollect your first Engagement; for the World is a bewitching thing, and without Care it will bubble us, and put upon us with Trifles, and when once it has got the Ascendant, 'twill foment Ignorance for an Excuse of Liberty; 'twill bribe a Man's Conscience, and *Subpæne* Reason against himself: For certainly its Promises charm Sense, and a present Possession transports Nature; but you should remember that Ratsbane is made with Sugar, and that the most sweet Poison is generally the most swift and mortal. Let therefore Health take Place of Pleasure, and scorn to die of the childish Disease of Liquorishness.

Eusebius had continued, but *Neander's* Arrival put a Stop to his Discourse. He came to lead him to *Theomachus* the Atheist, and was surprized to see his Friend in so extraordinary an Engagement. I am sorry (said he) to interrupt your Conversation, and must make a small Apology for my Incivility. But indeed I had rather be guilty of the Breach of Behaviour, than of my Word. I promis'd last Night to conduct you to your Adversary, the Time draws near, and he expects your Appearance.

Euseb. We Men of Arms are expos'd to Surprizes. I fell this Morning into an unexpected Ambuscade, and found my Quarters storm'd, before I received any Intelligence of an Enemy. In a short time I hope to dis-

gage my self, and to compose the Business *a l'amiable*, we must sue *Theomachus* for a Cessation of Arms till to Morrow, and then we'll open the Campaign. *Neander* sent his Man with a Letter to *Theomachus*, who acquiesced to the Proposal.

In the mean time, *Emilia* turning her self to *Neander*, spoke thus: Though I have had not the Honour of your Acquaintance, I am glad of your Arrival. Your Mein tells your Birth, and methinks I read good Nature in your Forehead. *Eusebius* has trespass'd upon our Patience, he has handled Quality with the Rudeness of a Carman, and flourish'd upon the Conduct of the Sex with Undecency of Application, and the utmost Strains of Clownery. Nay, he throws us out of Sense, and will not allow us any Tincture of Morality. Indeed his Civility and Judgment are both of a Size: Providence seems to have sent you to our Rescue.

Neand. Madam, His Majesty has not honoured me with the Dignity of Knighthood, and so I lie under no particular Obligation to defend distress'd Damsels. However your Quality commands my Assistance, and your Beauty my Esteem.

The Compliment took to Admiration; Joy posted through every Joint, and charmed the Lady into a pleasing Humour. She who before spilt Gall and Vinegar, by a strange Metamorphosis became all Honey, all Sugar. She had seen Forty, so that her Complexion was in its Wain, her Charms had stepp'd over the Meridian, and touch'd some Points of the *West*: Yet she buoy'd up the Decays of Nature by the Support of Art, and flung such a comely Varnish on these Breaches time had made, that like *Zenxis* she mistook Life for Imposture, the Effects of her Vanity for the Work of her Creator, and the Relicks of Age for Beauty. Nay, she ventur'd once to confess in good Company, Fifty Years weigh'd less on her Shoulders, than Thirty on her Face. Yes, said she, whilst my Cheeks wear *June*, let my Hair out on *December*.

A Compliment therefore so *a propos*, so agreeable to her Inclination, cast the Lady in a Trance, and laid all Resentment asleep. She became less untractable and more docile, she desired to learn not to dispute, but rather to amend her past Conduct than to defend it; In Effect she heard *Eusebius* with Attention.

This

This suddain Change hath often made me conclude, that Lenitives are more proper for Womens Constitutions than Corrosives. They may be sooth'd into their Duty, but not hector'd. A kind Word is more persuasive with them than a strong Reason.

After some Recollection, *Emilia* return'd *Neander* a Compliment for his, and forgot not to insinuate the Value she put upon his Esteem. Then turning to *Eusebius*, Sir, (said she) I undertake not the Defence of Ladies: None are without their Failings, and some not without Crimes: And I confess that the Number of those is less who live up to their Profession, than of those who dishonour it. Some square their Conduct rather by the Gospel of Sense, than of St. *Matthew*: And others are better vers'd in the Art of dressing, than of living well. But why must the General be lash'd for the Faults of Particulars? Let the Correction and the Disorder go together, and let those who carry off the Pleasure of a bad Action feel the Punishment. Must *Lucretia* be hooted at for a Prostitute, because *Messaline* cast off Shame? Must *Susanna* beat Hemp in the ancient Palace of *Bridewell*, because *Hellen* left *Menelaus* for a Gallant? Or *Judith* stand for a Fury, because *Jezabel* deserved the Title? I hope *Westminster-hall* Justice is less partial than yours, and the Arrests of our Judges better complexioned. We are all (as I have said) liable to Miscarriage; the best Principled trip sometimes: For Nature provoked by Sense, and roused up by Temptation, is apt to rebel against Principle. And then the Odds are vast on Nature's Side. What Wonder if Ladies train'd up in the Art of Behaviour overlook the Precepts of Morality, and persuade People by their Practice, they are better acquainted with the Civil Virtues of the Court, than the Theological of the Gospel.

Luc. Madam, these Satyrs, rather flow from Passion than Judgment; and I always revenge my self on such Toys with Silence; Contempt blunts the Edge of a keen Lampoon better than Reason, and no Reply disappoints the Author, and throws him off the Hinges. In a Word, *Eusebius's* Railing is no credible Qualification, it's a certain Symptom of a desperate Cause. For who flings Dirt that has another Weapon at Command?

Euseb. God forbid I should follow those Sparks, who have been the *Dupe* of one Woman, impeach the whole Sex as Complices of his Disappointment. No, no, if some Women deserve blame, others cannot be prais'd too much: Their Vertues are above Panegyrick, and their Merits above the Flight of Eloquence or *Hyperbole*.

Who can read the Book of *Judith* without Admiration and Transport? This great Lady seem'd to be fram'd above the Spheres by the Hands of Angels. Valour equalled her Beauty, and Vertue topp'd both. She had nothing Feminine but the Sex: Never was Grace better plac'd than on her Brow; it flash'd a Mixture of Charms and Terror; she darted Love, and commanded Respect: She attackt a proud Conqueror at the Head of a victorious Army, and subdu'd his Heart with her Face, to take off his Head with his own Sword. In fine, this brave Amazon fill'd the *Assyrian* Camp with Confusion, and *Bethulia* with Triumph. She stopt the Conquests of an ambitious Prince, and the Ruin of an innocent City.

What shall I say of the great *St. Catharine*, *Wealth*, *Youth*, and *Beauty* enter'd into a triple Alliance against her Vertue. Hell join'd Force, and Idolatry cruelty to the Confederates. Yet she defeated their Designs, and rais'd a Trophy to her Sex, and an eternal Monument to her Vertue upon their Ruin, for she overcame the Vanity of Philosophers with her Learning, the brutish Passion of an amorous Emperour with her Chastity, and the Rage of Hangmen with her Constancy. Flattery could not bend her Courage, nor Wheels break it: She liv'd a Christian, and died a Martyr.

St. Ambrose seems to have spent all his Rhetorick upon *St. Agnes*; yet his Words fall short of her Actions; and his Child did more than Eloquence can express. Her Piety was above her Age, and her Vertue above Nature. The Courage of this young Lady over-matcht the Fortitude of *Alexander*, and few Men at Threescore arriv'd at that Love of God she breath'd at Thirteen. Her Body was too little to receive the Sword, though not to overcome it, and altho' she was too young for Torments, she was ripe for Victory. The Spectators trembled while she stood unconcern'd, and the Executioner that gave the blow shew'd more Symptoms of Fear, than she that received it: In fine, she fell in the Combat, and went off with

with Victory : For as St. Cyprian notes, tho' Martyrs die, they are not overcome, and they are invincible because they brave Death. *Vinci not possunt, & mori possunt, & hoc ipso invicti sunt, quia mori non timent.*

The wise Conduct of Clotilda drove Paganism out of France, and rais'd Churches to the true God on the Ruins of Polytheism. She softened the Obstinacy of her Husband by Instructions, and polish'd the Ruffness of his Warlike Vertues, with the Practice of Morality; and at last brought this great Prince from Paganism, and the whole Kingdom to Christianity. *Hermenegildes* owes his Faith to the Piety of his dear *Ingundes*, for he had died Arian, if this orthodox Princess had not made him Catholick. In a word, God seems to have train'd up Ladies for the Propagation of the Gospel. A *Martha*, and a *Magdalen* receiv'd our Saviour into their House, before they let him into their Hearts; they refresh'd in *Bethania* his tired Limbs after the Fatigues of his Function; and when one Apostle betray'd him, and the others abandon'd him, *Mary* follow'd our Lord to *Cavalry*; and there durst mingle her innocent Tears with the sacrilegious *Crucifige's* of the *Rabble*. When the Apostles doubted of Christ's Resurrection, she proclaim'd it without Hesitation; and in Recompence of her Faith, Christ commission'd her to assume the Office of Apostle to the very Apostles. Wherever God spread the Gospel, he provided a Lady to further it. *Helena* planted the Faith in the Roman Empire, *Cesarea* in *Persia*, *Gezela* in *Hungary*, *Ogla* in *Russia*, *Dambruca* in *Polony*, and *Ethelburga* in *Germany*. In all these glorious Enterprizes Ladies led the *Van*, whilst Men only brought up the *Rear*. They marcht only upon the Traces of these great Heroines; and brought through the Barriers of Flesh and Blood, when they had plain'd the Way by their Example.

Indeed such noble Instances of Vertue are less Numerous in our deprav'd Age, than in the Days of our Forefathers. Yet many Ladies draw their Lives by their ancient and most admir'd Originals; I could name some of Figure and Title, who live in this World like People who knew they must live Eternally in the next. They are Meek without Sheepishness, Affable without Affectation, Reserv'd without Dissimulation, and Great without Pride. They reconcile the Highness of their Rank with

the humble Principles of their Profession, they dispute the first Place without Vanity, and stoop to the lowest without stepping an Inch below their Station. Here is Scripture in Practice, and Perfection in Life and Action.

Nean. Pray, Ladies, let this Panegyrick atone for the Satyr; if *Ensebius* has struck the Sex with one Hand, I assure you, he stroaks with the other; he dashes the *aigre* with the *doux*, and handsomely mingles Reproof with Instruction: He has Balms to heal, as well as Cauticks to blister; and when he has breath'd a Vein, he closes the Orifice with a swathing Hand. In a Word, he has knockt his own Libel on the Head, and like the Scorpion is both Poison and Antidote.

Emil. Good Nature is come upon him, and his Breeding is return'd to the Cure; he speaks now like a Gentleman as well as an Orator, and I promise him a fine Audience, if he'll preach in the Pulpit upon the same Subject.

Pray (said *Neander*, turning himself to *Ensebius*) favour us with the Cause of our Ladies Misfortune; for I call it a Misfortune to deviate from the Rule of their Profession, and to frustrate the very End of their Creation.

Enseb. It's indeed a Misfortune, but almost Universal; it's spread over the whole World, and affects the whole Species. *Emilia* has toucht the Cause, ill Education: This is the fatal Source of their Misery, the true Origin of all their Failings. Young Ladies are brought up as if God created 'em merely for a Seraglio, and that their only Business was to charm a brutish *Sultan*: One would think they had no Souls, there is such a Care taken of their Bodies; that God had enacted a Salique Law as well as the *French*, and excluded the Sex from the Inheritance of Heaven.

The seven Years of Infancy are spent merely in the entertainments of Sense; they are yet suppos'd unfit for Instruction, and so their little Passions sprout up without check, and increase without Controul. But under Favour, though in an Age so tender Children cannot be disciplined by Reason, they may by Sense: For I cannot see why their Passions are not in a Capacity of being moderated, so soon as they are in a Condition of being excited,

excited, for though they are not ripe for Precept, they are for Fear, Menace, and Caresses; and thus we see the Nurse oftentimes Frowns and Fawns the most forward Infants into a good Humour. Some Restraint therefore should be put upon their disorderly Propensions even in this Non-age; for if you suppose a Child to be a Brute at Seven, and treat him merely as such, in all Probability you will make him continue so till Ten. But alas! this timely Care is quite forgot; little Miss (like Mamma's Lap-dog) is caress'd till she is fit for nothing but to Play or Sleep. The little Creature must sleep on Silk, and feed on *potable Gold*. Like a *Bartholomew* Puppet she is wrapt in Gold and Silver, and practices Vanity before she knows the Sin.

So soon as Reason begins to sparkle, Miss is led into the Dressing-room; she is taught the great Mystery of the Glass, and all the important Secrets of the Toylet. Which Wash clears the Complexion, which conserves, and which repairs it. These are necessary *Prolegomena's*, or *Præcognita* to the Science. A Man may as well be a perfect Mathematician without the Knowledge of an *Angle* or *Circle*, as a Lady can be a Graduate in the Philosophy of the Dressing-room without these *Postulations*.

For Beauty being the chief Object of a Lady's Care, she must help Nature with Art, and polish the Work of the Omnipotent with a *French Wash*; she must fence it against the Assaults of Heats, the Excursions of Pimples, and the dangerous Inroads of the Small-Pox. She must, in fine, expose her Life to save her Complexion. And then to mould her Shape to the Court-Standard, what Pains does the Mother take on the one side, and what a Martyrdom does the Child undergo on the other? Her Feet are condemn'd to the *Scotch-Boot*, and her Body to the Torment of the Press. She is pen'd up in Iron, and forc'd to trail her Person. Besides, the poor Creature is put to a short Allowance of cold Water, or tied up to a Pittance of Barley-broath, and must keep a continual Lent in spite of our Statute-Book. One would think Hunger was a Propriety of the Sex, and Fasting the topping Qualification of a young Lady; her Mother will not suffer her to grow up to her Joints, nor to have all the Flesh and Bones God design'd her. And thus she is rack'd without and within for the Satisfaction of *Me*

dam, and the whole Body is sacrific'd for Shape and Colour.

And now Miss leaves the Nursery to ply at the Dancing-School, and to finger the Guitarr, or the Virginals; and when she has master'd a *Minuet*, and an Air *Alamode*; when she can practice a Brace of Grimaces, and wave the Fan, Good God! how Mamma titters; she is now fledg'd for the World, and sets out for Company. But she must beware of Reservedness, and fence against a Bluff; for these are Country Vices, Symptoms of Rusticity, Crimes against Breeding, and the Freedom of the Town. She is therefore taught a qualifying Embellishment in the Court Dialect call'd *Assurance*, in the *Christian Confidence*; and thus she mortgages Modesty for Behaviour, and almost robs the Woman to equip the Lady.

In the mean time, Age comes upon her, Passions get a Head, Temptations follow without Number, Desires without Bridle, and Vanity without Check. She is a Stranger to the Doctrine of Self-abnegation, and unpractised in the Methods of Resistance: She knows not what it means to balk Appetite, nor to subdue Sense to Reason. She has been set up by the Mother for a little Goddess, and the Family adores her like a Household Divinity. The Frowns of this little Creature raises Storms, and her Smiles fair Weather; you must no more cross her, than offend those Stars, that in the Pagan Theology rain'd Tempests on the Heads of those who disdained to salute 'em.

What a Tragick-Comedy did I behold at my Lady D's. I thought Folly could not rise to such a Height of Extravagance. Miss had the Misfortune to be baulk'd in a Childish Enterprize; the House rung immediately of the Disappointment, all was in an Uproar, all in a Confusion: The Violence of the Passion cast the Child into a Fever: The Mother's Pulse beat by the Daughter's, and because Miss was compos'd, good Mamma took Physick; and to carry on the Farce, the Chambermaid breath'd a vein. I fancy'd myself in *Lucian's* Island of Dreams, and what I saw was Vision and Rovey. For how (said I) can Folly strain so far? *Bedlam* is unacquainted with such Scenes of Madness, with such Flights of Farce and Comedy: Had the Vixen Humour been frightened away

with a little Severity, the Fever had withdrawn, and Birch would have wrought the Cure more efficaciously than Physick, or bleeding by Proxy. Thus Education adds Byass to Nature, and makes the Temper of Children more rugged, instead of polishing them.

Besides, Miss is not only mislead by the Fawning of the Mother, but too often poison'd by the Example of her Maid. If *Betty* has a Gallant, she is the Depositary of her Secrets, she enters into the Intrigue, and is inform'd of the Rise and Progress of the Adventure. Her Apartment is the Place of Affignation and *Rendezvous*, and by consequence she is Witness of all those Follies that wait on Love between Persons, whose Passion is greater than their Conscience. Such Spectacles stain the Imagination of Children, they carve Devils in the Brains of those, yet innocent Angels; and tho' at present they make no great Impression, they will in time cut out Work for her young Ladyship. They will awake the Fury of Love, and throw Fuel to this fiery Passion; for such Sights, like the Italian Poisons, work some Years after they are taken. The Memories of Youth are extremely tenacious, and if they are sullied with an undecent Object, will recollect it, till at last they transcribe it.

Now whilst the young Lady makes so fair a Progress in the Science of the World, she is a *Ignoramus* meer in the School of Heaven: Question her about Religion, she is a Stranger to the Language. One would think she dropt from the Moon, or had been train'd up among the *Cafres*: She can scarce distinguish a Church from a Synagogue, and knows no more of the Gospel, than of the *Thalmud* or *Alcoran*. And indeed, poor Creature! How should she be instructed, but by immediate Revelation? The *Credenda* of Christianity are not infused by Nature, and the *Agenda* too are in great Part convey'd to us by the Senses. Now who takes Care to instill these Principles into young Ladies? The Mother has too much Work on her Hands to undertake a new Employment, the Office of Catechist is below her Level, it's too pedantic and serious for a Person who affects Ignorance, and dotes on Mirth and Levity. Besides, she fancies her Obligation only reaches the Body, that the Soul lies out of her Jurisdiction; that if she fits the Child for the Court or the Town, she discharges the Duty of a Mother.

Now if my Lady forgets the most important Point of Education, will *Betty* remember it? If the Mother (like the *Ostrich*) abandons her young, and flies into the Wilderness, will the Maid be more careful? Alas! perchance she is as little vers'd in the Catechism as Miss, and knows no more from whence she came, or for what End she was placed in the World, than a Child in the Cradle. And altho' she were able to instruct, there is no depending on her Will. Servants are mercenary, they have an Eye on their own Advantage, they drudge for their own Interest, not their Mistresses; and by consequence to wind themselves into their Favour, they entertain 'em rather with Things that please, than with those that profit. They are, in fine, a Race of Insects that bask in the Sun, and cannot live without the Heat of their Ladies Favours.

Now what can be expected from a Woman brought up in Ease, Luxury, and Vanity on the one Side, and in a total Ignorance of Religion on the other? From a Woman flush'd already in all the gawdy Amusements of Vanity and Diversion, and quite a Stranger to any future Expectation? Who will bridle Passion without Reason? Or forego a present Satisfaction without some Prospect of a future? To sport down the Stream of Inclination is pleasing; but to row against the Current is a fatiguing Employment. Now no Man will tug at the Oar, without either the Hope of a Sallery, or the Fear of a greater Punishment. For Pleasure without Torments in Remainder, is in most Men's Opinion, preferable to Vertue without the Expectation of Reward. Having therefore so faint Invitations to Good, so powerful, so bewitching Allurements to Evil, we must not wonder if Ladies follow those Impressions, if Vanity over-rules Duty, and criminal Amusements run down Morality. Thus equipt young Ladies are consigned to Husbands: They change their Subjection, but not their Principles. With their portion they bring all the Extravagancies of their Childhood, and seldom resign 'em but with their last Breath. The first Education sinks deep, and in time twists its self with Nature: You may with as much ease wash an *ethiopian* white, as preach'd an ill principled Girl into a virtuous Woman. Here is the Cause (Ladies) of your Misfortune, the Origin of your Distemper.

Emil. Well! you have search'd the Wound, I hope you will apply the Remedy. Who knows the Cause of a Disease, cannot be ignorant of the Cure.

Euseb. My Profession makes me unfit for the Employment. However, a Ladies Desire is a Command, and requires Obedience.



DIALOGUE IV.

Ladies must avoid the Obstacles to Vertue.

Euseb. **Y**our Duty, Madam, branches into two Heads. You are a Christian, and a Mother. These Relations call upon you; God has placed you in a Station that requires a double Care, and you must extend your Endeavours to the discharging of both; for if you fail in one, you betray your Duty, and your eternal Happiness into the Bargain.

I.

That you may act the Part of a Christian with a *Plaudite*; let your Thoughts dwell continually on this great Principle. *That you are born for Heaven, and that this Life is but a short Passage to Eternity. It's but a Flux of Moment that will end. It's a Stream that disembogues into an Ocean without Bottom, without Limet.* It's not sufficient for a Pilot to know for what Place he is bound, when he first weighs Anchor, and hoists up the Sails; No, he must carry it continually in his Thoughts, and in his Eye: This influences every Turn of the Stern; did he once forget the Term of his Voyage, he would wander on the Ocean at Random, and never reach the desired Haven. Paradise is our Country, the World a Sea, and our Actions must waft us over to that fortunate Island. Now how shall we follow the Rule, and touch the blessed Point, unless we daily consider under what Degree of Latitude it lies? The Prophet *Jeremy* threatens all the Miscarriages of the *Jewish* People upon their Inconsideration. *The Earth lies desolate (says he) because Man will take the Pains to enter upon the Consideration of his Duty.* And I fear the Miseries of our present Nob

lity spring from the same Fountain. Our Forefathers have handed down to us this unfortunate Negligence, and it has improved in the Journey. For did we seriously reflect, that we are born in this World to live eternally in another, and that our Vertues will be rewarded with Glory, and our Vices with Fire; should we tire our selves in the Pursuit of Things merely indifferent, and criminal? Should we like Children set our Hearts upon Objects, not only trivial, but base and contemptible; and truck our Souls for a Rattle? I say, like Children, for what is the difference between them, and our high flown Mortals; but that these deal in Money, Palaces, Plate, and Diamonds; and those in Babies, and Hobby-horses: So that at best, if the Folly of those is more expensive, the Childishness of these is more innocent.

II.

The Doctrine of Christ must be your Guide, you must follow that Road he has plained by his Example, and points at in the Gospel. As he has promised the Reward, so he has annex'd the Conditions, and we must make good these, before we can lay any claim to that.

Now the first is, that we withdraw our Affections from this World, *Love not the World*, (says he,) its Maxims are dangerous, its Conversation infectious, and its Embracements mortal. Under the Appearance of a Friend, it masks Treason, and under the Disguise of Pleasure, it deals Torments; it dashes Honey with Gall, and throws over Poison a palatable Relish: Its Principles clash with Christ's, and therefore you are warned to break off all correspondence, on pain of forfeiting God's Favour. *Whoever is a Friend to the World, is God's Enemy*. In Christ reads Lessons of Humility in almost every Leaf of the Gospel; the World preaches up Pride, and magnifies Vanity. Christ commands us to contend for the lowest Place, the World for the highest; to please the World we must seat our Neighbour above our Heads, and we must throw him under our Feet to content the other.

III.

Now there being no Mean between these two Extremes; no Place for Neutrality; will a reasonable Creature pause one Moment to what Side he must go

over? Whether Interest lead him to join with our Saviour, or to take up with the World his Enemy? The very Deliberation is no less scandalous, than to debate, whether you shall apostatize from God, for a Correspondence with the Devil; or deprive your self of a real Satisfaction in this World, with Heaven in Reversion, for Misery travestied, and Hell in Remainder?

For think not, Madam, That the Followers of Christ must forswear Pleasure, and give up their Pretensions to present Satisfaction. Though their Desires lodge in Heaven, God antedates their Bliss on Earth; and gives 'em in Hand an Earnest of those Joys, they will possess hereafter. For let me tell you, the Friendship of Heaven, the Sense of our Mistakes, and the Pardon of our Sins are transporting Prerogatives. Is it not a Pleasure to condemn the World? To be above all sublunary Trifles? And to be a Slave to nothing? Is it not a charming Satisfaction to have a clear Conscience? To neither dote on Life, nor to fear Death? These are Delights above all the smooth Sensations of material Organs: And besides, they lie out of the reach of foreign Accidents, they are always at Hand, and cost us nothing.

IV.

Now what are those fine Things the World offers, and we so eagerly fly at? They are good in Shew, and evil at the Bottom; they are possess'd with Fear, and lost with Regret; they pamper Sense, and rack Reason: For, in fine, they are all reduc'd to Concupiscence of the Flesh, Concupiscence of the Eyes, and Pride of Life; i. e. to Sensuality and Honour: These make up the World's Riches, and our Torment: These are the Blessings so much talk'd of, so much adored, so dearly bought, and lost so easily: And yet they are a mere Sound, a Name, and nothing. Let us descend to Particulars.

V.

The Concupiscence of the Flesh takes in all those Pleasures that cajole Sense, and end in Brutality; and what Effect do they work upon us? Why, they glide upon the Organ, they print a smooth Impression, and lay upon the level with Animals. So that all we dare expect from sensual Satisfaction, is to be made miserable.

Men, and happy Beasts. Now methinks a Man's Brains must be ill placed, who pawns Conscience and Heaven for a Prerogative, so ill favoured and abasing.

VI.

Let us suppose the most exquisite Fowl of the Air fly to your Table: That *France*, *Italy*, and *Spain*, furnish you the most excellent Wines: What can Taste desire more? Yet when once Nature is satisfied, the eating is no more a Pleasure, but a Torment. For to feel the Stomach overcharged, the Body disabled, and the Fumes of Ragousts in the Head, is no great Satisfaction, unless Excess changes our Constitution, and turns Pain into Pleasure, and Health into a Burthen. In fine, the Delight flashes away in a Moment, and the Surfeit sticks by us a Fortnight; it preys upon our Vitals, and if it does not choak 'em, it's sure to disorder 'em; and after ends in a Winding-Sheet.

Indeed, Hearing is not so pleasant a Sense, it rather courts the Soul than storms, and if the Pleasure it conveys be less boisterous, it's generally more innocent: But however, it's too airy to be durable, and too fleeting to be relied on. For, what is it but a Preception of mov'd Air, that beats upon the *Tympanum*, and gently drums upon accustick Fibres? And can any thing be more unmanly, than to build our Happiness on so weak a Foundation? Besides this Pleasure is shorter lived than those Animals that cannot out-live one Day. I have seen the same Hand that charm'd the Company the first Hour, tire it the second, and those very Strokes that at first raised Transports, in the end grated upon the Ear, and became troublesome. Indeed this Pleasure is luscious, but it gluts in a Moment, and like Sweet-meats, breeds a Surfeit. Now methinks a Man must have a mean Valuation of Christ, to leave him for a Touch upon an Instrument, and a faint Idea of future Torments, to be fiddled and musick'd into Hell.

Do not mistake me; I am not for tying Damnation to an airy Sonet. I know we may regale our Ears with a Ragous of *Italian* Symphonies, without the Penalty of eternal Weeping; for I have told you, the obliging of this Sense is more foolish than criminal. But however the Effects are dangerous, for Musick has a strange As-

cendant over our Passions; it heats and cools 'em, it ruffles and transports 'em, it moulds and fashions 'em to any Figure; it awakes the Fury of Anger, and conjures up the Devil of Love: And these two Fiends drive full speed to Hell and Damnation. Caution alone sav'd *Ulysses*. He would not trust his Vertue with a fine Voice, nor his Philosophy with a warbling *Donna Margarita*; he rather chose to resign the Pleasure of a *Sola*, than to suffer the Misfortune of a Shipwrack; and would not barter his dear purchased Heroship for a Song.

It were to be wish'd our Gentry of both Sexes carried Wax in their Ears, as well as this Heathen General, their Occasions often exact the Precaution. They steer between the Rocks, and *Syrens* lie in Ambuscade to ensnare 'em. In these Circumstances the least Oversight is mortal, if we don't keep at a Distance from the Whirlpool, we shall be suck'd in by the Eddy. How many for want of Care have split upon the Quick sands? Was not Madam *W.* play'd out of her Reputation, and violin'd into a Match below her Quality? And how many Gentlemen have been sung out of their Innocence at the Play-House, and Musick-Meetings?

Tho' therefore Musick in it self be innocent, it's often fatal in the consequence, and strikes us at Rebound. And this is enough to rowze up a Christian's Care; where Duty obliges him not only to avoid downright Sin, but the very Tendency to it.

But alas! the Poison lies not only in the Notes, the very Words carry Infection: They are soft and amorous, and either blame Honesty, or provoke to Debauchery; they either personate the Despair of an abandon'd, or the Triumphs of a successful Lover. Now what is this but Stratagem to set ill Humours at work, and to make soft Rhime a Conveyance to Destruction? And indeed some Songs express so lively ill Practice, that it's not easy to distinguish the very Fact from the Representation. And so the Minstril instills all the Diseases of Rage and Love he counterfeits. It's true the Tongue presents the Poison, but the Ears drinks it; and both are guilty? For the Difference of the Organ makes a small Alteration in the Action. In fine, Ladies, such Madrigals are only fit to be sung by the Devils, and to be heard by the Damned.

VII.

The other Obstacles that stand between us, and the Compliance with our Duty, are the deluding Pageants of worldly Felicity; fine Sights, a glorious Retinue, and swelling Titles. Now what is all this Appearance but a Scene of Vanity? That Philosopher was not mistaken, who said, that the just Value of Things are known by their End, as Men by their Faces. And if we take the Dimensions of all human Happiness by this unerring Scale, how thin, how little, how contemptible will it appear, even to purblind Reason?

Tho' we suppose it constant to our Interest, that it waits upon us to the Grave, we then must take leave of it, and bid adieu to all those Objects, that dazled our Eyes, and led our Hearts Captive. Nothing will be permitted to pass with us into Eternity, but our Vertues and our Vices; those to refresh, these to torment us. God pronounced the Sentence of Death against the whole Race of *Adam*; and tho' upon Occasions he has dispenced with other Laws, this has, and will remain inviolable. The most evident Principles have been question'd by some, and deny'd by others; all Errors have found Abettors, but I never read of any Man so extravagantly foolish, as to doubt of Mortality. The Church-yards proclaim this Truth, the marble *Mausolea's* of Princes divulge it, and our dead Parents, in a mute, but emphatic Language, tells us, we must follow. In fine, *it's decreed that all Men must die*. Seeing therefore all worldly Happiness will once expire, and perchance even when we expect no Alteration; what can it deserve but Scorn and Contempt? How can that be called a Happiness, that ends in Misery, and will be follow'd by Repentance?

Nay, the Manner of leaving it, is oftentimes far more miserable than the End it self. The great *Antiochus* (when Prosperity ran high) forgot he was a Man: Victory waited on his Standards, and Success crown'd his Enterprizes: But if his Felicity was stupendious, the End of it was no less amazing. This glorious Prince fell first into a mortal Melancholy, than a loathsome Disease; his Bowels glowed with a raging Fire; and every Member that had contributed to his Pleasure, increas'd his torment. He call'd upon Death as the sole Remedy of his

his Disaster, and doted on that fatal Moment he once trembled at. All the Treasures heap'd up by Rapine, were unable to purchase the Slumber of an Hour. His corrupted Carcass exhaled so insupportable an Infection, that he was a Burthen to his Friends, and a Hell to himself. Thus he breath'd out his wretched Soul in a Tempest of Rage and Despair, and died rather the Object of Compassion than Envy.

What shall I say of *Nero*, *Vitellius*, and *Andronicus*? They saw the World at their Feet, and sparkling Diadems on their Heads; they were rather worship'd as Gods, than serv'd as Men; yet all this Glory ended in Outrage and Infamy: The first fell by his own Hand; the others by the Cruelty of the enrag'd Mob, that rather studied to torment those unfortunate Princes, than to butcher 'em.

Could Women mount higher than *Jezabel*, or *Cleopatra*? The one gave Laws to an opulent Kingdom, the other to an Empire; both swum in Pleasure, and were almost over-set with Prosperity. But alas! Their Grandeur (like the Ice of one Night) melted away in a Moment: The *Babel* of their Greatness sunk under its own Weight, and buried 'em under the Ruins. The first was prey'd upon by Dogs, and the second fell by the Sting of a Viper. What reasonable Creature would take these Peoples Felicity together with their Misery? Who would lead their Lives, and undergo the Cruelty of their Deaths? Can any thing more clearly evidence the Baseness of human Greatness, than these sudden Turns of Fortune. So that the *Carthaginian* Captain now mortally wounded, when he saw the World behind him, and Death before him, had Reason to read his surviving Brother this seasonable Lesson. To Pride, dear Brother, in Greatness, is a pompous Folly; high Commands stand expos'd to mighty Chances. The best built Fortune must yield to Hazard, or submit to Time: Nothing is certain in this Life but Death. What am I the better for having subdued Provinces by my Valour, and butcher'd Armies in my Fury; I feel at present that Violence others have felt from me. What vast Designs you rowl in your Brains? What Sieges? What Victories? But alas! All this is glorious only in Idea, great in Fancy, and nothing in it self but vanity: Read your Destiny in mine; and remember, that tho' you escape the Stroke of Violence

Natur

Nature will put a Stop to your Atchievements. Here is Spirit and Heat, *Pathos*, and *Emphasis*, and (what is more) Truth upon Experiment: And yet this Man was no *St. Paul* in a Pulpit, but a Pagan General in the Camp: He had but an imperfect View of the future Punishments that treads on the Heels of great Felicity.

VIII.

If you will not stand to the Judgment of a Pagan, I will put the Issue of the Cause upon your own. But I must first seat you in a Region above those Mists that darken Reason, and bias the Understanding; and what Place more proper than the Death-bed? Let us therefore contemplate your Ladyship in this Posture, struggling with a burning Fever, without Strength, without Vigour, ready to leave all Things, and to be abandon'd by all. Your Head burns, your Heart pants, and the Violence of the Distemper hurries Pain into every Artery. You turn your self into a thousand Postures; but tho' you change Place, your Torment follows. Your Bed of Down gives no Ease, nor can your whole Estate buy it. We will suppose, Madam *Lucia* runs through all the Arguments of the *Stoicks*, and marshals up all her Eloquence to raise your drooping Spirits. It's in vain, dear *Emilia*, to struggle against Mortality, there is no *Recipe* in the Dispensatory of Physicians against Death; it's a Debt we owe to Nature, and it must be paid. But at least you will leave behind an honourable Memory; you have acted a topping Part, and you go off the Stage with Applause. Every one does Justice to your Merit, and even those who envy your Fortune, confess you deserve a greater. The Ladies admire your Wit, the Gentlemen your Beauty, and all, your Breeding. *Dryden* has eternized your rare Perfections in Verse, and your Name together with your Titles, stand at the *Epistle Dedicatory* in *Folio*; so that when you die, you will live by Proxy, and your Fame will survive the Coffin. Will such an atheistical Homily put an irregular Pulse in Order? Will it heal a wounded Conscience? Alas! Madam, the Elogiums of the Living, make weak Impressions on the Souls of the Dead. Tho' we praise *Cleopatra's* Beauty in all Company, will she be less miserable? Because I admire the Power of *Semiramis*,

mis, will my Wonder extinguish the Fire and Brimstone that eternally consumes her? Will *Craesus* be rich, because I magnify his past Treasures? Will *Alexander* be at ease, because I commend his Courage? Or *Sardanapalus* in Pleasures, because he was once happy? Poor Creatures! they understand themselves, and their sad Condition too well, to receive Flattery, and are too emphatically miserable, to be refresh'd with the Remembrance of past Follies. Those that are laugh'd at by the Saints, and tormented by the Omnipotent, find small Satisfaction in the vain Huzza's of Fools or Sycophants. *They are praised where they are not, and are tortured where they are.*

And to come home to your Ladyship, give me the Freedom to put you this Question. When you find your self upon the Brink of Eternity, will the Remembrance of your *quondam* Pleasures open a Prospect of Joy, or of Repentance? Will you ratify your past Conduct, or deplore it with Tears, or perchance with all the Pangs of Rage and Despair? Will not worldly Happiness you once rated so high, fall low in your Opinion? And will you not wish rather to have contemned the glittering Vanities of the World, than to have enjoy'd 'em? For, in fine, Madam, you will then acknowledge a Truth you have now no Inclination to learn; that your Business is not to be great, but good; not to make a Figure here, but hereafter. Let me therefore conclude with the wisest of Men; *Beauty and Complexion are vain, but a Woman that fears the Lord shall be praised.*

And now methinks I have said enough to persuade a reasonable Creature, that the dazzling Presents of the World are painted Nothings, varnish'd Impostures, and gilt Illusions. That tho' they smooth the Brow, they are too superficial to fill the Heart, and rather fascinate than delight; and yet these Toys are the only Barriers that stand between us and Heaven. Could we but once heartily fall out with them, and regard 'em as Snares rather than Favours, Virtue would be planted without Labour in our Souls; it would grow up almost without Pain. But whilst our Hearts cling to Earth, our Desires cannot fly higher. They relish nothing but Colour and Surface, and study to oblige Sense, and to gratify Passion. Hence flow those Sins that stab the Soul,
and

and lead it to Perdition; that cut off our Right to Christ's Promises, and give us over to his Menaces. If therefore you intend to live up to the Gospel, you must break off with the World. This is the first Step to Virtue, a necessary Prerequisite to a holy Life; for Sin and Virtue can't lodge together.

Emil. You have held forth upon *Love not the World* to the Purpose, and have lash'd Grandeur, Wealth, and Pleasure, like a Galley-slave. But methinks you have carry'd Invektive too far, and flourish'd upon *Vanitas Vanitatum* beyond Measure and Justice. For if what you say be true, Christianity pens up our Liberty in a narrow Compass, and our Pleasure in less; and then how shall we reconcile that Freedom Christ purchas'd by his Death, to that Slavery you impose? Did God create the World to tantalize us? And shew the Beauties of the Universe merely to throw us into a Fit of Longing?

Lyc. Let him talk, Madam, Christ's Religion is Catholick, our Creed is positive; it is not cut out only for *Job's* and *Lazarus's*, but for Kings and Empreſſes. Why therefore must we dismiss our Equipage, or commence Apostates? Will you have Ladies turn off their Coaches to walk in Pattins, like Milk-maids and Oyster-women? Must they melt down their Plate, and make over their *Jointures* to the *Blue-Boys* of *Christ-Church*? Under favour, Sir, Christ is neither Leveller nor Tyrant. Not one Text in Scripture ties Sin to Silks, nor Damnation to Sattin; we may glitter in Silver here, and shine in Glory hereafter.

Euseb. I have indeed enlarg'd upon the Text, *Love not the World*, but when the Enemy is upon the Coast, it's time to fire the Beacon. Is not a *Caveat* seasonable, when you are within an Inch of a Precipice? Our Saviour has thunder'd a thousand *Woes* against the World, and its besotted Lovers; he cautions us against its Charms, both in Parable and Precept; and yet in Spight of his Command we run into its Embracements, and pawn Heaven for Trifles. Methinks Warmth and Severity too are very warrantable on an Occasion so pressing and extraordinary. If a Merchant put upon your Ladyship *Bristol-Stones* for *Emeraude*s, or *Venice-Glass* for *Diamonds*, would you frown upon a Friend for discovering the Cheat? The World imposes upon you counterfeit
Coin

Coin for Sterling, Tinsel for Gold, and imaginary Happiness for real Satisfaction. I have laid open the Imposture, and you complain I am too hard upon the Deceiver. Is it so obliging a Civility to protest your Purse, and so clownish a Service to save your Soul? Are Guineas so precious, and Souls so contemptible? So cheap?

You stand upon Christian Freedom, but you stretch the Privilege too far. For tho' Christ has knock'd off your Chains; and freed you from the Slavery of the Devil, he has not exempted you from the Subjection of his Laws: No, Madam, you live within his Jurisdiction, though you take a Ramble to the *Indies*; and you must obey his Command, or pay for the Transgression. Your Liberty therefore, though great, is restrain'd by Christ's Grant, and your Freedom is incumbered with Provisoes.

Nor did God create the World to tempt our Vertue, but to polish it for our Use, not for our Vanity, and furnish'd this noble Apartment for our Passage, not for our Dwelling. Use then the World, and love it also; but as Men do Physick, merely for Health. I would not counsel Ladies, nor Lords, to ease themselves of their Money, (as old *Grates* did) but then they must not overlook all the Laws of Nature to swell their Stock; they must not circumvent and counterfeit, nor dash Things out of one Nature, and brew 'em in another. They must not use light Weights, and false Measures, and haggle away Conscience for a Penny, and Heaven for Six Pence: They must not rack Tenants to feed Lust; nor pay their Laquey's Service with Bastinado's, nor their Chamber-maids with ill Language.

If you remember, Madam, I told you at our last Interview, you might also eat wholesome Food, that you might sleep on an easy Bed, and wear good Linen; that you might sometimes grace the Boxes with your Presence, and air your Body either in Coach, or on Foot. But then Christ forbids you to run stark mad after these Amusements, to devote all your Time to Diversion, and not a Moment to your Duty. He forbids you to sleep out the Day, and to dance out the Night, to lead the Lives of Bats, or Screech-Owls. In fine, Madam, you may allow the Taste sweet Meats, and the Eye fine Sights, provided you truck not your Soul for the Satisfaction.

faction. Let Sense sometimes play ; but then be sure Reason stands upon the Guard, and keeps it within the Bounds of Moderation. For these animal Faculties are wanton and craving, and if left to themselves, they'll vault over the Pale of Law and Duty, and weedle in the Heart to follow their Ramble. This is St. Paul's Caution to the *Corinthians*, chap. 7. *Let those who have Wives be as if they had none. Those that weep, as if they did not weep. Those that rejoice, as if they did not rejoice. Those that buy, as if they possess nothing ; and those that use the Goods of this World, as if they us'd them not.* That is, though these worldly Objects affect the Senses, they must not touch the Heart, this must stand above their Reach, and be Proof to all their Sollicitation. It must, like the Sun, that gilds the very Mire without being sullied, pass thro' these killing Vanities, without catching the Infection. Now this being so, we are not so confin'd as you imagine ; we have Liberty to be merry, though not to be mad ; and I suppose this Abridgment is no Breach of our *Magna Charta*.

Neand. Methinks, Ladies, *Eusebius* is Orthodox. He seems neither to tie up our Senses too short, nor to give 'em too much Line. He keeps within a just Mein, betwixt Severity and Indulgence, and neither sets Appetite at large, nor the Gospel upon the rack. It's the Abuse of worldly Pleasures he blames, not a moderate Use ; this stands with Christ's Law, and is practicable too. If we keep a heavy Hand over Sense, and upon Occasions refuse it those Diversions that are lawful, we may easily withdraw it from those that are forbid : But if we leave it to its self, and lay the Reins on its Neck, we shall find our selves in a Precipice. For whoever turns Nature loose, makes the pleasing Sensations of Sense her End, and so becomes a Lady of Pleasure. Now this Epithet in the Sense of our modish Dialect sounds harsh and scandalous, and indeed in the more vulgar Acceptation it grates upon the Ear, for they are often incident ; for that Lady who makes Pleasure her Business, will catch at any ; and if an innocent one comes not in her way, Passion will suggest those that are not innocent : And then how can we persuade our selves that she who lives for Diversion, will refuse the Occasion ?

Emil.

Emil. You have removed the Obstacles to a Christian Life, pray inform us now in what this consists, for I perceive we live under positive Precepts, as well as Negative; and as Christ forbids some Things, so he commands others.



DIALOGUE V.

They must practise Humility and Modesty.

I.

Enseb. *Æternitati Pingo*, said once a famous Painter. Let our Design in every Action look as far. Why shall the Expectation of a vain Applause work more powerfully on a deluded Pagan, than the glorious Promises of our Almighty Saviour upon Christians? Every vertuous Action, as *St. Bernard* notes, passes, but does not perish; its a heavenly Seed, that dies for a time to revive in Eternity.

II.

Regard each Day as the last, and behave your self as if you should not see to Morrow. The Reason why we manage so much Time ill, is because we always suppose we have too much on our Hands to husband well. We build upon the Future that lies out of our Reach, and by consequence is not at our Disposal; nay, and perchance never will; and thus we leave our Souls to Chance, and trust Hazard with our Salvation. Whereas did we persuade our selves we were upon a Removal, we should lay up some Treasure for our Journey, and send Vertue before to prepare our Lodgings. For our Reception in the next World will answer our Behaviour in this. *What we sow in our Lives, we shall reap after our Deaths.* If Vice, Torments; if Vertue, Pleasure.

III.

The Piety of a Christian consists in Works, not Words. And therefore we fall short of our Duty tho' we speak well, if we live ill. *Celia* was continually upon the Topick of Vertue; she forced its Panegyrick upon all Company,

pany, and pour'd out its Encomiums at Random in all Conversations. One would have thought she had *Curam Animarum*, and that half the Ladies of the Court were her Parishioners in spite of the Curate of St. Martin's, or St. James's. I confess her Devotion appear'd to me more affected than real. I thought it had more Flame than Fire; and that she harangued in Jest, because she seem'd so much in Earnest. But Authors were divided upon the Question; for some without Appeal to the *Rota* were for canonizing her, and a pious Sister would needs remove St. *Ambrose*, to find her a place in the Calendar. What a precious Soul is this, cried she? Good God! Her Tongue trots so fast *Heavenwards*, her Heart must needs gallop after! In fine, she speaks the Language of *Sion*, and therefore must not be of the Seed of *Canaan*.

But after all, this Lady's Devotion was mere Sound, with a Dash of *Mein* and *Grimace*. Her Anger was violent, and her Vanity extream. She never baulk'd one Passion, without gratifying another; and if she practis'd a Vertue, 'twas to make room for a darling Vice. Had she spoke less, and done more, she had come nearer the Mark of her Profession. For as *Naxianzen* observes, *A vertuous Action though mute, is worth a Folio of Rhetorick without Effect*. Run not into this Folly. The Tongue of an Angel, without the Heart of a Seraphin, is insignificant; it may indeed procure some Repute in a Female Congregation, but will not gain one Grain of Glory in Heaven.

IV.

In all your Actions seek God alone, and never make your self a Slave to the Applause of Men, Hypocrisy and Dissimulation are always incredible, but in Matters of Religion monstrous to a Sacrilege. To sweat in this World, and be tormented in the next; to labour with the Saint, and burn with the Devils is frenzy. Yet, alas! how many are found Saint without, and Fiend within? Who cloath Vice with the Robes of Vertue, and so walk in a Road to Hell, whilst they pretend to march for Heaven. *Cynthia* set up for a Saint of the first Magnitude; but she built all her Piety upon Hypocrisy. She took her *Plan* from the *Pharisees*, and model'd her Conduct by their Practice. She was a most rigid *Genevian*; first fram'd by *Baxter*, and then polish'd on *Bridges's* Anvil.

Anvil. She had the turn of the Eye in Perfection, and topp'd the Twang of the Predestinate. Nay some say she could wind a Church of *England* Lady Seventy, and a Papist a Mile at least. She pray'd in *de la Sol Re*, and groan'd the Family into a Quartan Ague: And what is strange, this holy Impulse seldom came upon her but in Company. She constantly read Scripture at the Window, and at last became a Nuisance to the Neighbourhood. I never heard her but I fancy'd my self in *Bedlam* at a Lecture of *Oliver's Porter*. She continually harp'd upon the Baptist's Exhortation to the Jews, and sigh'd out *Repent, Repent*, with an *Emphasis*. Good God, said I to my self! What Farce? What Illusion is here? To correct Sin with Pride, and preach Repentance with Hypocrisie is Amazing. Now all this Grimace run upon Interest. The Lady had a Month's Mind to hear Mr. B. prone upon her heavenly Gifts in the Congregation. And indeed he spent his Lungs, and laid out a world of *Cant*, and mystical Jargon upon the Subject. But this was not all, a well-meaning Brother of the Godly Party, had an Impulse to pair *only in the Lord*. He was brimful of the Spirit, and well stock'd with a Creature Men call Gold. He was more inquisitive for a godly Yoak-fellow than a beautiful one; and priz'd the Wealth of the Soul above all the vile Trinkets of Fortune. *Cynthia* put in for the Bigot. The good Man bit at the Hook, and her Grimaces gain'd her Twenty Thousand Pounds, and in time cost him as many Curses. Her Voice was *Jacob's*, but she had the Hands of *Esau*. Her Piety carry'd a fair Appearance, but under the Mask lurk'd Dissimulation, and Interest. Though she stole the good Man's Purse, she pawn'd Consciences; and consequently the Gain did not balance the Loss; and what is wonderful; she pretended by the same Legerdemain to lay in as good a Stock for Heaven as she had for the World, and to over-reach God, as she had wheedled the good Man. Well (said I) Conscience (I see) is pliable, and Interest can force it (like *Proteus*) into all Shapes. Thus we make Partiality the Scale of Vertue, and every Interested Sister has *Midas's* Faculty of touching every thing into Gold. Pray, Madam, espouse not this Ladies Morals, her Casuistry is too indulging, and obliges our vicious Inclinations too much to come up to the Standard

dard of Christ's. He will have the Heart as well as the Action, and will not go Halves with Interest; if you drudge for temporal Profit, you defeat all Pretensions to Eternal. Nay, if you observe Christ's Law upon such base Views, you will be cast out of Heaven with Hypocrites that transgress it. Our Saviour commands us to keep our Piety to our selves, and to confine it to Darkness and Secrecy. Nay, when we fast we must perfume our Head, powder our Hair, vamp up our Complexion, and upon so extraordinary Occasions, Ladies may be permitted perchance the use of Washes, to conceal from the Eyes of Men this Mortification. Vertue like Glass is easily sullied, a Word oftentimes tarnishes its Lustre, and a Look, like the Eye of a Basilisk, murders it.

However, omit not a good Deed out of an Apprehension of being discovered. This would be to stretch Caution too far, and to keep up to one Precept by the Breach of another. For though our Saviour in one place recommends Privacy, in another he orders us to be Vertuous in Publick for Edification. *Let 'em see your good Works, and let 'em glorify your Father which is in Heaven.* Gregory the Great in *Cap. 13. Matth.* handsomely reconciles these Texts, that seem to jar; let our Actions be publick, but let our Intention be secret; that at once we may edify our Neighbour by our Example, and by our Intention to please God alone, wish it were private.

Let therefore your Devotion have no Tincture of earthly Views; let it aim at God's Honour, and your Soul's Salvation, and if you purchase Heaven you have crown'd your Labour. But in the mean time fear not to stand up for Vertue, and show you are in earnest by your Practice: So many go over to Vice, and so heartily carry on its Interest, it's necessary for the Friends of Godliness, to make some Provision against the Assaults of so prevailing a Party, and so convince the World Vertue is not quite forsaken. Now who are more proper to raise Vertue, and humble Vice, than Ladies of Quality? They are exposed to the View of the Vulgar, and receive Homage and Incense (like the old Female Deities) from their Inferiors; they are aped by the Sex of a lower Rate. Their Fashions, Mein, Gesture, and Carriage are copied by Citizens Wives and Daughters, and these Pretenders to Politeness, glory in the very Follies of

a Lady. Now seeing you have such an ascendant over them, why may you not lure 'em to Godliness as well as to Vice? Why may they not fall in Love with your Christian as well as your worldly Deportment, and fashion their Conduct by yours, as well as their Commodes? Vertue in Embroidery is more amiable than Vanity in its most dazzling Equipage; its Charms are Attractive; and when once People are convinc'd, they may be fine without, and rich within; that they may live Great and Innocent too; it's odds, they'll rather chuse to live gently and pleasantly with a good Conscience, than like Reprobates with a bad one. And if once Vertue be fashionable among the Ladies, it may in time be *A-la-mode* among the Gentlemen also. For, with these, their Approbation is a kind of Law almost as inviolable as those of the *Medes* and *Persians*. And Men will rather suffer a Restraint, and clap Nature under Hatches, than purchase a petty Satisfaction at the Rate of a Lady's Displeasure. Thus, because Women have an Aversion to a tempestuous Conversation, and start almost as much at a Hector's Oath, as at the report of his Pistol; no Man of Breeding will any more swear, than Duel in their Presence. Now if a Principle of Civility can bridle one Vice, why can't it silence another? And thus, Madam, you may become an Apostle without the Labour of Preaching; for Example moves more than Homily, though it be less clamorous.

V.

Humility is the Foundation of all Vertues, it's the Gate of Religion, *primus Religionis introitus*, says *Cyprian*; and he deserves the Name of Infidel, who is unfaithful to this favourite Vertue of God made Man. To say that Ladies have no need of Humility, is to say the Sick have no need of Health, nor the Indigent of Support. It's necessary for all, but Ladies cannot be saved without it. For besides the common Infection of Pride, they inherit from their first Parent, what additional Increase do they receive from other Quarters? Quality and Equipage warms the Passion; Flattery and Courtship quicken it; and the innate Propension of the Sex it self sets it afloat. And when such a multitude of Channels feed the Humour, what wonder if it swells over the Banks, and bears down Vertue together with Reason?

Indeed

Indeed to stand on Tiptoe upon such trifling Advantages, is an evident Mark of a strong Passion, or a weak Judgment; and I easily persuade my self, that Ladies would stoop lower, did they but take the Pains to consider upon how groundless Pretensions they fly so high.

Your Father bore Title and Escutcheon, but was not your Mother a Chamber-maid? If so, I would desire you not to screw up your Quality too high; for like the *Dutch Coin*, it's only half Sterling. You are a kind of *Mulattoe*, European on the one side, and Savage on the other; i. e. a Compound of Gentlemen and Spinsteress. What is here that deserves an over-weaning Conceit?

But though your Blood has run from *Hector* and *Andromache*, thro' an undefiled Channel into your Veins; manage the Advantage with Modesty, and do not magnify it beyond Proportion. For after all, this refined Blood, if tried in the Laboratory, will prove tainted upon Experiment; and an Alchymist will draw as fine Spirits from that of a Dairy-maid, as from that of a Dutcheess. Could our Ancestors make over their Vertues by Will; could they settle upon their Descendants Sense and Merit, together with their Titles and Lordships; brave Progenitors would be a great Privilege. But alas! these towering, these ennobling Prerogatives are merely Personal, they are incommunicable Perfections, and neither descend to Heirs Male or Female by Right of Gift. Believe me, Madam, noble Minds and mighty Dignities go not always together. I have often seen *Wit* in the Coach-box, and *Folly* in the Coach; *Beauty* in Linsy-Woolsey, and *Deformity* in Sattin; *Merit* in the Maid, and *none* in my Lady. Now methinks Quality waited on by the whole Retinue of Title and Equipage, being neither the Purchase of our Industry, nor the Reward of our Merit, should not work upon our Vanity, nor swell our Presumption. We should rather thank Providence for the Favour, than Pride in the Gift; for, in fine, we have no more Reason to look big upon the Matter, than a *Genet* in embroidered Harness.

But if your Parts and Quality are not of a Piece, if this raises you above the common Level, and those throw you below it, you are only indebted to Nobility for the Post of a *Scaramouch*, to divert your Inferiors, and to be scorn'd by your Equals.

And as for Equipage and Attendance, tho' it makes a gawdy Show, at Bottom it's rather trivial than significant, and has more of Appearance than Reality. For it only argues either some Credit, much Money, or more Vanity. Now these Advantages are of a base Alloy, and they must be gazed on through strange Glasses to appear considerable. Madam P's Credit run her in every Merchant's Book, from the *Exchange* in the *Strand* to that in the *City*. She waded Chin deep, but by Misfortune, tho' Credit enter'd her Name in so many, it was unable to cross it out of one; so that it had been greater, had it been less. For, in fine, she run on tick, till she sunk her Purse with her Credit, and then she cursed her Merchant's Credulity, and her own Folly.

Money indeed has some Charms, it feeds Vanity, and casts a sparkling Varnish over Peasantry and Meanness; but, alas! This Lustre is borrow'd, it's a mere Glow-worm Light, that dazels more than it warms; it comes from Fortune, not from Nature or Complexion; it gilds the outside, and sports upon the Superficies, but leaves the inside as naked as it found it. In fine, it makes People often worse, but seldom better, and gives 'em the opportunity of playing the *Prodigal* or the *Miser*.

But nothing enlivens Women's Pride more than Flattery and Courtship; and yet what can be imagined more silly? They are so over-charged with Presumption and Self-love, that they believe themselves Mistresses of all those Perfections, Brain-sick Lovers, or fawning Sycophants are pleased to assign 'em; and sometimes mistake a plain Satyr for a Panegyrick, and grow big of Conceit for being Lampoon'd. The Queen *Stratonice* had not one Hair on her Head, and yet she gave a Poet six hundred Crowns for comparing it to a *Violet*. The Comparison was new indeed, and the Analogy so far fetch'd, that it comes not within sight of Sense. But, however, the Lady admired the Discovery, and became so excessive proud upon the Compliment, that her Violet Hair render'd her more ridiculous, than none at all. For by a Vanity so ill-grounded, and so unreasonable, she gave the World a Demonstration her Skull was as bare within as without, and that her Brains did not out-weigh her Locks one Grain. But tho' a Lady should be graced with the Hair of *Aurora*, with the Eyes of *Venus*,

the

the Majesty of *Juno*, and the Feet of *Thetis*, (to speak in the Poetick Jargon) alas! What is all this but Vanity and Imposture? But Mire glaz'd over with Snow? But an Idol of Fools? Or a Flower that opens and fades, that exhales Perfumes and Stench the same Day? What Language can reach the Extravagance of those who rate themselves upon so inconsiderable Advantages? They are distemper'd beyond all Lunacy of the Mad-house, and should be tied up to Diet, and confin'd to Darkness and Discipline.

But to raze down these Ladies Stomachs, and to bring their soaring Thoughts a Point lower. I would desire 'em to take a Turn in the Church-yard, and to try whether they can distinguish the Soul of a Princess from that of a Kitchen-wench; whether the Ashes of *Dives* are better qualified than those of *Lazarus*: Or the Bones of *Cæsar's* are made of more noble Ingredients than those of Peasants; or (least such a melancholly Sight should work too much upon your Complexion, and fright you into Convulsions) fling away a Visit upon Madam S. she was once the Town Beauty, the Life of Meetings, and the Lady of *May*. She rated her self not by the Pound, but (like Diamonds) by the *Caract*, and was so extravagantly fond of her little Self, that she fancied her Body a Compound of the fifth Element, all Celestial, without Dross or Matter. But a Consumption has tam'd her Pride, and fetch'd down her towering Conceit. She is in Extremity; she runs, poor Creature! through a Course of Pain; she consumes by Inches, and loses her Blood by Drops. She read me (I assure you) a more emphatical Lesson of Vanity than *Solomon*, and convin'd me, Women must be mad to be proud. This Death-bed Figure is certainly an humbling, tho' a most instructive Sight, and would Curiosity lead Ladies sometimes within Prospect of such Scenes (I conceive) the Price of Female Perfections might fall. For, in fine, to set in so black a Cloud, to withdraw with Convulsions, to go off with Deformity, and like a Candle to vanish in Stench, is a mortifying Rebuke to the Dignity of human Nature.

Look therefore upon all the Goods of Fortune and Nature, as the mere Effects of God's Liberality, not of Merit. That they are only lent, not given; and by consequence call rather for Gratitude than Pride.

Keep your Rank among the Great Ones, and disdain not to stoop to the Peasant when Charity commands. Hate Flattery as a Plague, Hypocrisy as Poison, and a base Complaisance as mere Apery. Speak ill of no Body, praise seldom; but never your self.

Lose not Sight of your Faults, nor depend upon your Vertue. This is God's Work, those solely your own. Endeavour to be pious, but never think you are so. And tho' you live up to the Height of Christian Perfection, suppose you are only at the Bottom. We may Sin by esteeming our selves too much, but cannot by valuing our selves too little. And to put Nature to the Blush, practise upon Occasion some publick Actions of Humility. For Example: You may feed the Poor with your Alms, and serve 'em with your own Hands. Tho' such Acts are low, they are not mean. And they rather ennoble Dignity than degrade it. The great Empress *Helen* appear'd taller on her Knees, when she wash'd the Feet of poor Women, than when she sat in her Throne; more glorious when she wiped them with a Towel, than when she rode in a triumphant Chariot: And more great when she served at Table the devout Virgins at *Jerusalem*, than when she commanded in *Rome* or *Constantinople*.

Why may not Ladies also sometimes favour an Hospital with a Visit, as well as the Play-house? An Hour would be better spent in this Theatre of Misery, than in that of Diversion. Here you learn Humility, and practise it; and although you leave an Alms behind, you carry away the Merit. At *Paris* I have seen the topping Ladies of the Court, in *l'Hotel Dieu*, help and comfort the Sick with great Charity. They refresh'd those poor Creatures not only with Words, but with Cordials and Juleps. I could wish the *Mode* would Sail into *England*. It edifies I am sure, and would become Quality, and sit as genteelly on Ladies, as *French Fontanges*. For, in fine, a Christian Submission is the top of Gallantry, and gives a greater Lustre than Equipage or Escutcheon. To stand above the Vulgar in Rank, and below 'em in Affection, to be esteem'd by others, and contemn'd by our selves, is to abandon the Sentiments of Nature, for the most refined Morals of the Gospel.

VI.

As Humility regulates the Interior, so Modesty disciplines the Exterior. This is the *Index* that marks the Motion of our Soul: It discovers the Situation of our Passions, and tells us whether they obey the Empire of Sense, or of Reason. For Providence seems to have designed the Face, not only for Ornament, but for Information. Nay, the Soul flies into our Behaviour, and we can read its Inclination and Disgust as legibly in our Actions, as Physicians the State of the Body by the beating of the Pulse.

Thus Gregory of Nazianzen saw the Disorders of Julian's Soul in the Irregularity of his Carriage, and pronounced him a Runagate before he had apostatiz'd from Christianity.

I shall not consider Modesty in Opposition to Wantonness: This would lead me too far; but as it's defined by Zeno, the *Science of decent Motion*, i. e. as it polishes the Exterior; and cut off all those Exorbitances that render our Conversation offensive, or less Christian. I know indeed St. Paul commends it in this Acception to all; but tho' it reaches the *Masculine* Part of our *Species*, it concerns more properly the *Feminine*. And it's no more esteem'd a bare Ornament, but a Propriety of the Sex. So that a Woman discarded of Modesty, ought to be gaz'd upon as a Monster. Let her be set off with all the other Embellishments of Art and Nature, so long as Boldness is read in her Face, this Vice alone will Eclipse her other Perfections, and like a Cloud overcast all the glittering Beams of Beauty, Wit, and Dignity.

Nor indeed is it any Wonder that Modesty is so much the Right and Interest of the Sex. For this is the *Argus* that guards their Treasure against all the Attacks of Surprise or Impudence. When Brennus with his victorious Army enter'd Rome, the Gravity and Majesty of the Senators aw'd the licentious Soldiers into such a Respect and Reverence, that not one for a long time durst approach 'em. And I believe a Lady well stock'd with Modesty, may look upon the loose Desires, and keep at a Distance the Attempts of the most impudent Assailant. For certainly true Vertue has more Authority than Affectation, and a Christian Reservedness, than a Stoical Severity. When a Town is well provided within, and
strongly

strongly fenced with Out works, a victorious General has seldom the Courage to attempt the Siege. The Expence, the length of Time, the Losses, and, in fine, the Uncertainty of Success scare him from the Enterprize; so that he wheels off to the left forfeited, as of more easy Conquest. Our Gallants seem to follow the same Method; they are so far from tempting a modest Woman, that they can scarce dare look her in the Face; her Countenance and Air, rather fright Passion than excite it. They conjure down impure Love, and raise Respect and Esteem. In fine, she is so encompassed with Modesty, there is no making an Approach, and by consequence no Prospect of Success, and this Difficulty cools the most fiery Lust, and discourages the most violent Sensuality. No Body but *Asmodeus* himself will attempt to violate such a Sanctuary.

But when they espy a Lady without Reservedness, who is endued with many attractive Qualities, and has nothing that awes; no Out-works that guard her Virtue; they are tempted to storm her Constancy, and if she lends a patient Ear to the Encomiums of her Wit and Beauty; if she stays to receive the Attack, she is in Danger of being at Discretion. For, in short, this Remissness is a kind of Capitulation; it's a Mark the Defendant is press'd, and then follows a Surrender: So that the Necessity of this Vertue ought to awake the Care of Ladies, and quicken their Endeavours to purchase it.

Now if you ask me what it is, I have answer'd with *Zeno*, it's *The Science of decent Motion*, i. e. it's a Mixture of Gravity and Sweetness, that stamp Piety on the Behaviour, and make the Divine Transports of the Soul sparkle in the very Eyes; it reaches every Part of the Exterior, and guides our whole Comportment Abroad and at Home, in our Closet, and in Conversation; in fine, it plants Vertue upon the Forehead, and draws *Decorum* upon the Exterior.

But by Gravity I understand not a morose Sowerness, nor a starch'd Behaviour. The first marks ill Nature, the second Pride and Affectation. I would neither counsel Ladies to make wry Faces, as if they were taking a Dose of *Coloquintida*, nor walk as if like *Bartholomew* Poppets, they mov'd by Wire. This is not Modesty, but downright Grimace, and has more of the Mimick than Vertue.

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The one Frights, the other raises Laughter. Keep within a Mean; Extreame are vicious; extraordinary Gestures are as unbecoming, as antiquated Dresses.

But be sure to take Care of the Tongue. This is an insolent Member, and needs all the Precepts and Instructions of Modesty, to be kept within the Compass of Decency.

Pretend not in Company to Wit; you will certainly betray your Judgment. Women seldom appear more foolish, than when they aspire to the Glory of being thought wise. Good God! How was I plagu'd t'other Day with the Impertinences of Madam H. She comment-ed upon *Aristotle*, and Lectur'd us upon the *Summe* of *Thomas Aquinas*. She scorn'd the Female Topick of Modes and Dresses, and was for dancing on the high Ropes of *Physicks* and *Divinity*. We were first regal'd with *Materia Prima*; then came up a Dish of *Occult Qualities*; and at last a whole Plate of Theological Terms were flung among the Company. It was as impossible to stop her in this learned Career, as a Ship under full Sail, and you might have sooner silenc'd a Hurricane, than have fetter'd her Ladyship's Tongue. The Sex admir'd her Wisdom, and the Men smil'd at her Folly. She is made a Provision of School Jargon, and laid it out with much Prodigality, and more Assurance. But all her Knowledge stuck on the Superficies of Words, she enter'd not into the Sense. So that the Fame of her Parts shrunk under Experience, and this Phoenix of Women prov'd only a well taught Parrot.

Beware of too great Talkativeness, a Fault incident to the Sex, and extreamely offensive in Conversation. It favours of Boldness, and is a great Intrenchment upon the Liberty of Company. She who monopolizes the Discourse, silences the rest, and assumes the Quality of Mistress; and so keeps School without Licence, in plain Contradiction to our *Statute Book*: Nay, and what is more, a Pythagorean School, in which other Ladies like Pupils undergo the Penance of Silence, whilst she enjoys the Satisfaction of Speaking. This is (I think) a little imposing, and she who offers her Company upon so hard Conditions, deserves to lead the Life of a Recluse, for few Ladies will go to the Price of the Purchase. Freedom of Speech is as undoubted a Prerogative of a Female Meeting, as of the House of Commons. In

In Conversation you must suppose all are not of the same Opinion, bear therefore a Contradiction with Calmness and Moderation; and be not too kind to your own Errors. Infallibility is neither an Appendix of Nature, nor of Grace: Women may fall into those Mistakes by Surprize or Ignorance, without any Abatement of their Parts, they cannot vindicate without Dishonour. So that it's more prudent, as well as more modest, to confess a Fault, than to defend it with Eagerness and Passion. Over-rate not therefore your own Sufficiency, for tho' some Diamonds are said to be above Price, Merits are not, Fancy not your Understanding moves in a higher Region than other Peoples; or that you must necessarily be wiser, because more Beautiful or Noble. Believe me, Madam, these Qualities are not the true Standard of Knowledge: A fair Frontispiece is no infallible Sign of well furnish'd Rooms. The inside may be poor, though the outside be rich: And I suppose the Walls are not stronger for being ancient.

Little Love-Intrigues oftentimes are the Subject of Women's Discourse; and generally People are paired by my Lady, before they are join'd by the Parson. It's a great Breach of Modesty almost to know such Things, and Boldness to throw 'em into Conversation. For the Laws of *Decorum* are so severe in regard of Women, that it's almost a Fault to pronounce the Word *Love*. They can scarce discover a dislike of an ill Thing without Blemish, nor even Blush without disobliging their Modesty. For, in fine, those Discourses argue a vicious Inclination, or a Memory ill furnish'd, or Curiosity misapplied, or rather all Three. For certainly, without Pains, it's hard to glean so great a Provision of *Amouretts*; and without some Inclination, as hard to run such Lengths in the History of Intrigues.

In a word, let Modesty not only chuse the Subject of your Conversation, and regulate the Management of it, but tune the Voice, and order the Accent. The Tongue must not break out into Noise and Tumult; like the Platonick Harmony of the moving Spheres, it should charm, but not be perceiv'd at a Distance. Would Ladies make the Purchase of those Vertues their Business as they are their real Concern, they would bid fair for that Perfection, their Profession, Sex, and Station require. There

There are others indeed necessary, but because they reach the whole Species, and concern Men no less than Women, I shall refer you to the Catechism for Instruction. Besides, too many Precepts rather fright than instruct, and are more apt to cast us into Despair, than to raise a Resolution of observing 'em.

Emil. I thank you for your Charity, Sir, and wish my self so happy as to comply with your Instruction: But they seem too vague; favour me therefore with a Summary of those Actions I must perform each Day. Draw up a Scheme, and set me a Journal.

Enseb. Alas! Madam, you may as well ask me to cut out a Manteau for the Moon. Circumstances vary, and cannot be brought to the same Rule. However, I will lay a *Plan* before you, and hope your Prudence will fit it to your Occasions.



DIALOGUE VI.

A Regulation of their daily Actions.

I.

AN Effeminate *Sabarite* thank'd the Gods that he had never seen the Sun rise in his Life. I would not have Ladies imitate this Pagan Copy, much less, must they value themselves upon so superlative a Laziness. Live not as if you were our *Antipodes*. Curiosity is suppos'd to bear a great Sway over Female Inclinations. Let it therefore lead you to this great Planet's *Levee*, at least in *December* and *January*. I assure you, Madam, it rises with more Majesty than the greatest Monarch; and this Morning Scene outshines the Gloeworm Pageantry of the Play-house. It gilds the Heaven with its dazzling Beams. It turns every drop of Dew into sparkling Diamonds, and commands Nature to change her Night-rail into Cloth of Gold and Embroidery. Besides, it wakes almost every part of the drowsy Creation. Birds and Beasts begin *Matines*, and proclaim the Glory of their omnipotent Maker. Why should Man be less acknowledging than Beast? Or instinct Work more forcibly than Reason?

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II.

So soon as you are up, fall upon your Knees, and adore that mighty Being that made you. His Greatness calls for Homage, and your Dependance stands obliged for the Payment. Offer up every Action of the Day to his Glory ; such an Intention sanctifies the meanest, and stamps a new Value upon the most Holy. Ask Pardon for past Offences, and rather resolve to die, than to transgress God's Commands for the future. Sue for the Support of his Grace ; without this you are impotent, and with it invincible.

III.

Reflect what Occasion of Sin may present it self, and prevent the Danger by Prudence and Forecast. A Temptation foreseen is almost overcome. But he lies at the Mercy of an Enemy, who is assaulted by Surprize and Stratagem. When you discover an Ambuscade, keep at a Distance ; to tempt Temptation is an unseasonable Bravery. I would as soon rouse a sleeping Lion, as come within its reach ; for, in fine, the Victory is not sure, but the Peril is certain.

IV.

Stand not upon mere defensive War, for tho' you struggle handsomely for a Time, and keep your Ground, you will at length be overpower'd with Number ; if you intend to come off with Conquest, carry War into the Enemies Dominions. The Advantage for the most part lies on the Assailant's Side. Single out therefore every Day some Vertue, and make sure of it by Practice. The Duty of a Christian is not only to suffer, but to do ; by resisting the Allurements of Flesh and Blood, you lose no Ground ; by exercising Vertue you gain upon the Devil, and so increase your Forces, and weaken his.

V.

When you have discharged your Duty to God, spend some time upon the Government of your Family ; the Business within Doors lies upon your Hands, and is part of your Province ; and you must not do all by Deputy. Indeed I would not have you enter upon too Minute a Detail, nor register the Hen-roost in your *Table Book*. It's below your Station to hunt every Day after Hens Nests, as Madam L. did ; or to calculate the Number of Ducklings ;

lings ; nor should you survey the Hogfly to mark the worst of the Litter for the Tithe-Pig ; these Actions favour of Meanness, they argue Avarice to Excess, and sit unhand somely on Quality.

VI.

When you sit at your Toylet keep Vanity at a Distance, and remember you trim a Body that once will sink into Corruption. Look upon your Robes as Badges of Infamy, and reflect, Ladies had never been fine, had they remain'd innocent. I know, indeed, as the World goes, Nobility must make a Figure : Quality and Title without Appearance will never draw Respect ; they require a Support. The Senses of the Mob must be struck, and their Imagination affected ; for they seldom dive beyond the Surface, and measure Quality by gawdy Trappings and Equipage. However, tho' you use these Toys, your Affection must soar above 'em, and you must never esteem the worst Parts of Beasts, to be the greatest Perfection of your Sex.

The brave *Esther* was raised from Subjection to Command, and from Servitude to the Throne. She walk'd on Silks, and spit in Silver : Nature had made her a compleat Beauty, and Providence a mighty Empress ; and yet she protested in the Sight of God, that her Greatness was a Burthen, and her Finery a Torment. Thou knowest, my God, (said she,) that mere Necessity obliges me to live in Pomp and Glory, not Choice ; and that I scorn this glittering Diadem, the Envy of a thousand Ladies, and the Desire of more. I wear it with Regret, and only when I must appear in publick, and lay it down when I retire to my Apartment. The Turn of Fortune has wrought no Change in me : I am a Slave on the Throne, a poor Caitif in Embroidery, and a Beggar in the Face of Plenty. Tho' I possess the Scepter, together with the Wealth of *Asia*, I enjoy nothing but the Satisfaction of prostrating my self, and my Grandeur at the Foot of thy Altars. For, in fine, the Contempt of my Greatness flies higher than my Fortune, and the Excess of Pleasures is the Object of my Aversion. Here is a seraphick Transport for ye ! It's all Light, all Fire. A Heart that can thus scorn an Empire is larger than the World, and more capacious than the Emphyreum. She was a Queen without, all Angel, and all Seraphin within. Did Ladies bring

bring such noble Sentiments to the Toylet, they would charm Heaven; and whilst Men admire their Bravery, the very Angels would fall in Love with their Vertue: For then they would measure the gawdry of their Mantau's precisely by the Length of Quality, not by the extent of Pride or Vanity; they would keep up to the Exigency of their Rank, without deviating from the Duty of their Religion.

VII.

After Dinner you may employ some time at your Needle, or other Works suitable to your Condition. *Augustus Caesar* thought not such Occupations below the Dignity of his Wife and Daughters: Yet he was a great Man, and those Ladies mighty Princesses: And I suppose our Lords would not dispute the Wall with him, nor the Wives the Precedence with his Children. The *Romans* kept the Distaff of Queen *Tanaquil* with more Care, than the Lance of *Romulus*, to teach Posterity, that it was no less necessary for the good of the State, to propose to Ladies Examples of Labour, than to Men Patterns of Bravery. And *Solomon* in the Character he has drawn of a Heroine, flourishes upon her Oeconomy and Labour. *She put* (says he) *her Hands to Work, and then open'd 'em to the Necessities of the Indigent; she Spun both Linen and Woollen:* Yet she is not represented as a Country Dame, but as a Peeress: For her Husband sat *cum Senatoribus terræ*, i. e. in the House of *Lords*, or at least of *Commons*. Wheels indeed are at present more out of Fashion, and Ladies will no more Spin, than make *Bone-Lace*. Seeing Custom has degraded the Employment, I will not counsel you to re-instate it in its pristine Dignity. But, however, Needle-work is reputable, and the most qualified Ladies may Embroider without descending from their Station. Believe me, Madam, Idleness is an ill Employment; and she who has nothing to do, will be tempted to do more than will stand with Conscience, and perchance with Honour. For when we have no good Thoughts, we are generally pester'd with bad ones; and when Ill is in our fancy, it slides with ease into the Will.

VIII.

You may season Work with Reading, for though Women should not pretend to commence Doctors, yet I would not have 'em forswear Knowledge, nor make a Vow

of Stupidity, God has favour'd you with a reasonable Soul, enrich'd it with the Science of those things, that give Life to a civil Conversation, and instruct you in the Duty of your Profession. For your Court Assurance, your Adresses, in the Modes, and Gestures of Salutation, your graceful Entrance into a Room, and all the other pretty Accomplishments of the Sex, are dead, unless enlivened by a handsome Discourse. Is it a mute Scene, a *Bartholomew Poppet-shew*, that surprizes some, and furnishes Matter of Laughter to others. Is it not ridiculous to see a Lady with a great deal of Formality drive to a Rendezvous, and at the end of a short Compliment fall immediately upon *Fontanges* and *Foretops*? So much Pomp, so much Ceremony out-do the Occasion; the Entertainment is too trivial for the Solemnity. Those that will not learn to speak *a propos*, should learn, methinks, to hold their Peace; for it's much better to speak nothing, than to bolt out Follies.

Indeed it's not necessary to Rival the Knowledge of the Sybils, nor the Science of the Muses, she should not wade too deep into Controversy, nor soar so high as Divinity. These Studies lie out of a Lady's Way: They fly up to the Head, and not only intoxicate weak Brains, but turn them: They engender Pride, and blow us up with Self-conceitedness, and when all these meet, we shall be apt to measure Faith by our private Judgment, and to set up our ill-shap'd Notions against the receiv'd Tenets of our Religion.

Read therefore those Books that lead to Piety: They enlighten the Understanding, and warm the Will; they lay open the Cause of our Miscarriages, and at the same time prescribe the Remedy. They neither flatter Quality, nor insult Peasantry, but like Pictures made to Sight, they look equally upon all: In fine, they refresh the Memory, enlarge the Understanding, and inflame the Will, and so thro' Pleasure instill both Wisdom and Vertue.

IX.

You may afterwards either return Visits, or receive them; but perform both with as much Expedition, as Civility and Ceremony will permit. Long Conversations flag, they languish at an Hour's End, and fall into mere Chat or Impertinencies. For Women have seldom Materials to furnish a long Discourse, unless they Comment

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upon their Neighbour's Failures, and turn their Misfortune into the Subject of Diversion. Now to laugh at anothers Expence is not only disingenuous, but unchristian. Rather take a turn sometimes to the Play-house; but be sure first the Piece be cleanly, clear complexion'd, neither larded with Smut nor Blasphemy; that it neither arraigns Vertue, nor buffoons Religion; that it has nothing offensive to the Eye, nothing to the Ear. In fine, that it be either Instructive or Innocent. For if it makes bold with God, or lashes his Ministers; if it encourages Vice, and hoots at Vertue, you must no more appear there than in a Pest-House. Diversions bought at the Expence of Conscience are too dearly purchas'd.

X.

Before you go to Bed withdraw into your Closet, and take an impartial View of your Conscience: If it upbraids you with no crying Sin, give Glory to God, and with bended Knees, and an humble Heart thank him for the Favour. For not your Vertue, but his Grace has kept you upon your Legs, and either remov'd or vanquish'd the Temptation. But if you have stray'd from your Duty, sue for Pardon; and lay not your Body to Rest, till you have obtain'd quiet for your Soul. When the Conscience is disorder'd, Sleep can scarce be found; a wounded Soul keeps the Body awake in spite of *Opium*. And though it does not, you should no more shut your Eyes in a State of Sin, than sleep on the Brink of a Precipice. For alas! How many does Death assail in their Beds at unawares? And what is worse, unprovided? Poor Creatures! They awake in Hell, and only recover their Senses to feel the Extremity of Torments. But when by a hearty Repentance you have calm'd Conscience, you may sleep securely. Though Death steal upon you by surprize, it will not find you unprepared; it can only convey you from a transitory Repose into eternal Rest. Here is a short Journal of a Christian Life, and methinks it may easily be brought to Practice. A Lady that can't suffer so small a Constraint, must be strangely fond of Liberty.

Emil. Well, the Scheme seems practicable, and if nothing else be requir'd to live like a Lady and a Christian, Vertue incroaches not so much upon Freedom as I imagin'd. Pray, Sir, go on, to oblige me with a short Comment upon the Duty of a Mother.

DIA:

DIALOGUE VII.

The Duty of a MOTHER.

Enseb. **T**HIS Command, *Honour thy Father and thy Mother*, is Reciprocal, and not only obliges Children to respect and revere their Parents, but also enjoins Parents to love their Children; and this Obligation comes not only from the Decalogue, but immediately from Nature. Nor does she discharge the Duty of a Mother who fawns on, and caresses her Off-spring; who pampers their Bodies, and wraps them up in Silk and Cotton. No, no, her Care must reach their most sublime Part, the Soul. This must be cultivated, and manur'd with Principles and Precepts, that it may answer the great End of its Creation. Now because the Males so soon as they are capable of Instruction are taken from the Mother, I shall only touch upon the Education that fits the Females.

I.

Teach them betimes the End of their Creation, their Duty towards God, and the Obligations of Religion. Explain the Creed and the Decalogue; the first instructs 'em in Faith, the second in Manners; and omit not the Pains of the Wicked, and the Joys of the Just; the one will fright from Sin, the other will allure 'em to Vertue; nor suffer 'em only to rest in the Knowledge, but inure them to the Practice, by all the little Arguments of Kindness and Authority; and secure the Observance by the Tenures of Love and Obedience. Seldom apply Severity till mild Methods prove ineffectual: For Children must not be taught Piety (like Dogs to set) with Stripes and ill Usage: They never do a Thing heartily when compell'd by Force, and oftentimes hate those Exercises at Thirty, for which they were chastised at Ten. Some Years ago I fell into the Company of my Lady N. she ply'd me with such a long-winded Panegyrick of her little Daughter, that I began to wish the Child less accomplish'd, or the Mother less fond: She was Beauty in Life, and Wit in Perfection. Nay, and so skilful in the Ways of the Lord, that I suspected she had made at least two Voyages to Heaven, or had hit upon an Invention to travel to Paradise by Scale and Compass.

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Well, Madam, (said I) such a Wit, such a Divine Infant, I presume, knows the Catechism.

The Catechism! replied she, I hope so: And the first Chapter of *Genesis* also. And then immediately was I regal'd with a Scene of Question and Answer. *Moth.* Who was the first Man? *Ch. Adam.* *Moth.* Who was the oldest Man? *Ch. Methusalem.* *Moth.* Who was the wisest Man? *Ch. Solomon.* Nay, cries Mamma, she can tell you the Wives of *Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.*

You have led her I suppose (said I) to *Joseph-Ben-Israel* the Jewish Herald; and intend to enter her in the Synagogue. Is this all!

All! answered the Lady, and a great all too. Nay (replied I) it's nothing at all to the Purpose: Indeed she has learnt the Nurses Catechism, but not the Church's. Why? The Jews know this, and believe it too, and yet are not Christians. Come, Madam, leave these odd Methods of Instruction, and come up to the Grounds of Christianity. Plant the Principles of Faith and Godliness so deep, that neither the Impulse of Flesh can shake them, nor the battering Engines of the Devil move them. A Bead-rol of cramp Names may polish and refine the Memory, but what is this to the capital Point, Salvation?

II.

Instruction, unless arm'd with Example, will prove insignificant. Young Creatures sooner yield to that, than Rhetorick, and give more Credit to the Eyes, than to Reason. If therefore the Mother's Conduct preaches Vice, tho' her Mouth dilates upon the Necessity of Vertue, the Child will suppose her in Jest, and rather steer by her Practice, than her Precept. Wo be to those Mothers, who make Daughters Witnesses of their Disorders, and thus immortalize their Transgressions by recommending them to their Descendants.

III.

Let not Romances come within reach of a young Lady: They are the Poison of Youth, and murder Souls, as sure as Arsenick or Ratsbane kills Bodies. Their Style, Matter, Language, and Design are pointed against the Defence of Vertue. They sully the Fancy, over heat Passion, and awake Folly; and like lewd Pictures, are the worse for being excellent. They kindle those Flames that cannot be extinguished without Trouble, nor enter-
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tain'd without a Crime. Nay, like the Fire of Hell, they are almost Eternal, and what is worse, the very Torment pleases: And so, as *Nero* did *Rome*, we behold our selves in Flames with Pleasure and Transport. In a Word, Madam, a Romance is a bewitching Imposture, it fascinates the Imagination with a Fool's Paradise; it communicates the Charms to the Intellect, and then hurries the Will God knows whither. Like sweet Morsels, it fawns upon the Palate to captivate the Heart, and plays with the Organ to cut our Throats: In fine, they give the Passion they represent, and so by an unhappy Inversion, the very Copy produces an Original.

Alas! When a young Creature reads over flourish'd Descriptions of enchanted Castles, of glorious Carousels, of sumptuous Banquets, of conquering Beauties, and captive Knights; what a fine Landskip will they draw in her Head? How powerfully will they work upon her tender Heart? What a Tumult will they raise in her Breast? Those Scenes, tho' merely Romantick, solicit in good earnest; they reinforce Passion, and are mighty Recruits to Folly; they set the Sex into a Fit of Longing; (for tho' Women were made of Bone, they retain all the Pliableness of Flesh :) How often will she envy a *Philoclea* for having a *Pyrocles* at her Feet, and how seriously will she wish herself in the Place of *Pamelia*. Nay, it's odds, when the Fancy is warm'd, and the Imagination charm'd with the advantageous Characters of those Platonick Knights, she may fall in Love with the bare Product of *Sidney's* Brain, and become a real Slave to Fable and Fiction. Or tho' she arrives not to such a pitch of Frenzy, it's very probable she will attempt some Conquest, and spread Nets to ensnare a Gallant, that will as fatally entangle her. Nor can she fail of Expedients to delude her Guards; the Author that kindles the Passion, shews the way to carry on the Intrigue, he provides her the Methods and Stratagem, and warrants Success, and so a Fable is turn'd into a real Story: But with this Difference, that instead of a Prince, *Mademoiselle* goes off with a *Valet de Chambre*.

IV.

Lead 'em not into Company till a strong Vertue arms 'em against the Danger of Temptation, their Senses must be guarded, and ill Objects be kept at a great Distance.

Flesh and Blood have a natural Tendency to Extravagance, and will scarce stand unconcern'd under the Allurements of Example and Invitation. It's dangerous, says St. *Justin*, for a Man to admire the very Vertues of a Woman; and, I believe, it's not more secure for a Woman to stand the Flattery and Courtship of Men. Now when both Sexes meet, Gallantry always manages the Conversation. Would you thrust a Child into a Pest-House without Necessity, and without an *Amulette*? Why then will you lead her to confus'd Meetings? In those *Rendezvous*, as well as at *Constantinople*, some Body always carries the Plague Sores, and gives the Infection?

Emil. You are I perceive an Enemy to Breeding, will you have Ladies as unpolish'd as Shepherdesses? Where can they learn Behaviour but in Conversation and Company?

Euseb. Madam, you mistake me, I am not against Breeding, but I am for Vertue. And, I must tell you, this will turn to better Account than that: For by Breeding I suppose you mean a Gracefulness of Conversation, a decent Assurance, together with some pretty Postures *A-la-mode*. These Qualifications (I confess) are commendable, because they introduce us into Company with Advantage; but then they must not be magnified beyond Proportion. I would not have Mothers so fantastically Fond of them, as to place 'em among the top Perfections of the Sex; nor to expose a Child's Innocence for a Brace of Grimaces. For, in fine, they are easily gained, and Ladies by the Assistance of Vertue may be acceptable without them. And I am apt to believe, that a native Beauty, without these acquired Embellishments, if it be waited on by Modesty, Meekness, and Devotion, will sooner find a Match, than Beauty without Piety, though set off with the most ornamental Graces of Education. But why must she converse with Men for Education? Would you have her pass through a Course of Debauchery? Or do you think she cannot be genteel, unless she be tainted? Would you have her blaspheme like a Sea-Captain, or curse like a Drayman? I grant she may learn this hellish Dialect of Men, and may be courted out of all Sense of Honour and Probity. But these, I suppose, are no Female Qualifications, and

and therefore till they receive the Stamp of publick Approbation, pray let tender Virgins forbear such dangerous Haunts.

Luc. Under Favour, this Caution goes too far, you will bar *English* Ladies the Liberty of the Church, as the *Turks* do the *Asiatics* that of the Mosques; for there is a mixt Conflux, and I have seen as fine Gentlemen at the Sermon, as at a Ball.

Euseb. Really, Madam, I am so far from debarring Ladies the Freedom of the Church, that I counsel 'em to appear oftner there. But then I am for introducing a Jewish Custom, *i. e.* for separating the Women from the Men, and for drawing a Curtain between 'em. Thoughts, I am sure, would be more recollected, and Piety would go on more evenly. But as Things are carried, these very Meetings are not secure, and Vertue is expos'd to Temptation. Bad Designs are often laid in this Sanctuary, and the Intrigue is compleated in more lewd Places. For in Truth, People appear before the Lord not in Sackcloth, but in Gold and Silver, and one would think they came rather to commit new Sins, than to cancel the past. The Ladies sit on Cockhorse upon Scaffolds in open View, as if they were at the Theatre, and perch above the Crowd to be gaz'd at. And as they are seated advantageously to be seen, so their Elevation gives them a fair Opportunity to see; and thus the Danger is Reciprocal. Notwithstanding it's a Christian's Duty to go to Church, and this is his Warrant; and if we take a little Care, God will not let us miscarry for Obedience. Besides, though People bring ill Designs, the Majesty of the Place, the Solemnity of the Action, or at least the Zeal of the Preacher may stifle 'em, and keep in Awe and Respect the most wild Nature, and so they who came Sinners may return Penitent.

But this concerns not those Meetings where both Sexes convene to dance and sport. Neither carry Modesty or Restraint to those *Rendezvous*! These Vertues are too Supercilious and Censorious for the Occasion; Seriousness and Thinking are left at Home, or dismiss'd at the Door, and Piety never obtains a Ticket, so that People come here unguarded, and Vertue without Defence: Besides, the Parade, the Gawdry, and Gaiety of the Company solicit hard, and plead for Disorder. The one be-

witches the Eye, the other the Heart : And then Mirth emboldens Passion, and invites it to Action. Soft Musick doubles the Charm, and wanton Airs reinforce it. They disarm Caution, and enervate Courage ; and then, when the Collation has boil'd up the Blood, and put the Humours in a Ferment, without doubt Vertue is in Danger ; the Ground is slippery, the Tide runs high against Flesh and Blood, and will certainly carry down a tender Virgin with a young Vertue into Indecencies.

Emil. You are, I perceive, for clapping up Ladies into Convent-like Vestals ; or at least for confining them to back Apartments, as in *Spain* and *Italy*. But Solitude will not agree with our Complexion ; we are of a more sociable Temper : And besides, I am of an Opinion, that Restraint is no sure Guard to Vertue. A Woman of Piety will keep up to the Duties of Religion in Company, but Retirement will scarce secure the Honour of a Prostitute. The *Italians* and *Spanish* Donna's are not more regular than ours ; though there is much Caution in those Kingdoms, there is more Miscarriage : Nay, I have read in *Lery*, that the *Braslian* Ladies, where Manteau's are out of Fashion, live within the Bounds of Honour and Decency.

Euseb. God forbid I should think of Cloystering up Ladies ; those Retreats are fashionable indeed beyond Seas, but they are Heterodox and Illegal in *England*. They have been voted down by both Houses as Useless and Superstitious, and who dares oppose his single Opinion against the Joint Judgment of those grave Senators ? Liberty is the darling Privilege of *Englishmen*, and the Fondness reaches the Sex. Keep it in God's Name, but strain not the Prerogative, for Liberty in its full Latitude is a greater Nuisance than Slavery ; and to be at freedom to do any thing, is no less prejudicial to Society and Manners, than a Power to do nothing. Vertue consists in a Mean, Ladies must not be mew'd up like Nuns on the one side, nor must they wander about like Vagabonds on the other. I would not have 'em kept Prisoners in their Mother's House, nor yet be Strangers to it. But then like Prisoners of State, they should not walk Abroad without a Keeper, and should be debarr'd those Haunts that may surprize their Vigilance, and assail their Vertue. Madam *Dinah* would needs give the Ladies of *Salem* a visit,

visit, she had a Curiosity to view their Modes, and to try their Breeding; but, alas! she lost her Honour in the Voyage, and return'd with less Credit than she went. I fear our *English* Damsels meet with the same Adventure, and buy their Breeding by the Forfeiture of their Innocence: For, alas! we have *Sichems* as well as *Canaan*, and young Gentlewomen perchance not better prepar'd for Defence, than the Daughter of *Jacob*.

I have no Talent at Parallels, nor am able to determine whether the Spanish *Donna's* Vertue falls short of that of our *English* Ladies. But if they are bad under Restraint, Liberty will never mend them. Opportunity makes the Thief, Temptation presses harder near, than at a Distance. It rises upon Sight, for Sense is stronger than Memory, and Life than Painting. Now those who rack their Wits to find a Temptation, will scarce dispute against it, if it falls in their Way; besides, free Commerce meets more Occasions in a Week, than *Italians* or *Spanish* under a Confinement are able to procure in a Year.

I can give no Account of the *Brasilian* Modesty, nor intend to argue *Pro* or *Con*, whether fine Clothes, or none at all are more dangerous; however, I would not have young Ladies brought up by the Standard of the Line. I am not in Love with your Equinoctial Casuistry; nor admire the *Topinbeian* Modesty half so much as old *Lery*. Your Behaviour *del Cabo* will not relish in *Europe*, nor your *Adamitical* Garments fence Vertue in *London*. Nothing can check Nature but good Principles and great Caution. Nay, Vertue tho' solid must not be trusted too far; for if it be press'd too Home, 'twill march off, and give us the Slip.

Wherefore to conclude, lead not your Daughters unto Balls, without Necessity or Civility require their Presence, and even seldom in those Circumstances. Such Nourishment is too strong for weak Stomachs, and I shall not wonder they lose their Health, if they feed so foul. To guard Chastity without Spot or Stain, is no easy Taste; it moves upon a steep Ascent. Now those who talk and laugh can scarce strain up a Hill. If Care and Pains will hardly do, what will become of those that are rock'd in Pleasure, and lie under all the Instructions of Debauchery? But I forbear to enlarge upon the

the Subject, the Practice won't bear a Defence. When the Cause is naught, we should not strain for Pretences: In a Word, it's certain such Conversations are dangerous, they rouse bad Humours, they vitiate the Fancy, and prepare the Will for Rebellion.

Emil. Too free Conversation is not without some Inconveniencies; but then consider that Retirement is not exempt; for the Fancy will break Inclosure, tho' the Body be coop'd up; nay, and bring into the Chamber all the Species of exterior Objects; and, it's odds, ill Objects will crowd in with the Innocent, and may probably meet with a kinder Reception; for they glide smoothly upon the Sense, and then a Girl not much employed, may divert Melancholly with the Prospect.

Euseb. You are in the Right, and you prove that the most strict Recluse is always within the Reach of Danger, but then she stands more out of the Way; and if the Copy of unlawful Things make such a deep Impression, the Original would sink deeper.

But first I have provided against Idleness, by counselling you to bring your Daughters up in the Practice of those Works that become their Age and Quality; by inuring them to the Lecture of those Books that feed Devotion, and Delight without Danger.

Secondly, I only speak against the Company of Men; they may visit their own Sex, and pass away the Time in those Recreations, that neither clash with Decency, nor endanger Vertue; and if they grow uneasy upon so small a Restraint, and fall into Fits of Melancholly, you may conclude the Cause of the Distemper lurks in the Soul, not in the Body, and that the Heart should rather be purg'd than the Spleen. Indeed you should not trust your Child without good Caution even with her own Sex, for all are not Staunch. Some are unballast, and too Light, and if they are infected with Pride or Vanity, if they languish after the fading Pleasures of the World with Prejudice to Vertue, they may scatter the Contagion both by Words and Example.

V.

But let not your Care out-run Prudence. Importune not a Daughter at Fifteen with Precepts and Instruction, you may exceed by Severity, as well as by Indulgence; and by forcing her to be too Good, tempt her to do Evil.

Allow

Allow some Grains to Youth, and rather wink at light Faults than chastise 'em. You cannot expect at Twelve the Maturity of Forty; nor the Stay'dness and Prudence at Fifteen, as of a Lady of Fifty. Youth is unfurnish'd with Reflection, and sometimes acts rather by Impulse than Reason. Now time will sooner heal such Failings than Reproof, and Age is a better Doctor for this Distemper than Expostulation; for when Correction comes often, it loses its Force, it makes no Impression, and sometimes works the wrong Way; *i. e.* it's received with a Pet, and perchance with a Raillery too; and thus what was intended for a Remedy becomes Poison, and rather kills than cures. You forfeit your Authority first, and then the Daughter withdraws her Respect and Kindness to make way for Aversion; and when this unlucky Passion steps in, what can be expected but Noise and Clamour? And God send it ends there. Young People are headstrong, and oft'ner follow the Advice of Resentment than of Prudence. A young Lady of my Acquaintance a great Fortune, and handsomely qualified with all the Accomplishments of Art and Nature, flung her self away upon a Man unworthy to be her Page. I expostulated the Matter with her, and shew'd her the Unbecomingness of the Fact: She easily condescended so far, as to confess she had done ill, but laid the Fault at her Mother's Door. She tired my Patience (said she) with imperious Reprimands, as if she intended rather to Torment than Correct me. I was either too Gay, or too Reserv'd, and no more able to please her in Solitude, than in Company. When I pray'd, Bigotry was coming upon me; when I read, Madness; a Smile was constituted Lightness; a Frown, ill Nature; fine Cloaths, Vanity; and a common Dress, Sluttishness. So that my Mother play'd either the *Momus*, or the *Fury*. In fine, I hung continually upon the Rack, and the Torment was too sensible to be endur'd with Patience. I found no way to break my Chains, but by beating out new ones; and cast my self away, not to languish in Slavery. I confess the Speech touch'd me no less than her Misfortune; and if I compassionated the Daughter, I detested the Conduct of the Mother. Take Care least you push Severity too far, and mistake not Forwardness for Correction. I have seen the most cowardly Creatures (when press'd) turn upon those that chas'd them,

them, and sometimes vault from a Tower to save themselves. Great Pressures cause desperate Attempts, when they meet with a violent Passion; and whosoever supposes a Sense of Duty, will always over-rule a strong Resentment, is ill acquainted with Human Nature. Be have your self to your Daughter, not like a Goad, but as a Companion: Lay down the Authority of a Mistress, and take up all the Kindness of a Mother. When you have a Child's Heart, you may mould her into any Shape; but when you have her Aversion, you may undo her by Reproof, but will never mend her.

VI.

When you have brought up a Child in Piety to an Age of Maturity, nothing remains for the Discharge of your Duty, but a Settlement suitable to her Education and Quality. This is a Matter of the highest Concern, and therefore requires much Caution, and long Deliberation: For what can't be undone, must not be done without Thought and Reflection. Cross not the lawful Inclinations of a Child out of a View of Interest, nor tie her to a Man for whom she has no other Passion but that of Aversion. When Marriages are made without Love, Love often follows without Marriage: And thus you force her to be miserable, and tempt her to resign her Vertue and Honour.

Here is a short Sum of your Duty, and I could wish you would spend some cool Thoughts upon the Subject, it's of Importance, and deserves Reflection. What is here laid down has nothing hard, nothing Bigotry; it neither encroaches upon Quality, nor entrenches upon a decent Freedom; and tho' it did, you must remember God will not give Heaven *gratis*; it's a Reward, not a free Gift, and something must be done to deserve it. Glory is not purchas'd without Labour, nor Wealth without Pains, and yet Death cannot withhold the Soldier from the pursuit of the one, nor the Death of Tempest and Quick-sands deter the Merchant from the Chase of the other; And yet what are those if compared to the Treasures God has prepared for the Godly in Heaven? If then Men drudge for Things so fading and transitory, how can you refuse to labour for those that are Eternal? And if a bare Hope of Success persuades Men to run upon certain Perils; methinks the infallible Promises of our Saviour deserve

serve as a great Compliance. Heaven, Madam, is a brave Purchase. What a charming State is it, that places us above Pain, and seats us out of the reach of Death? That supplies all we can desire, and removes all we can fear? That puts an end to Wishes, and a beginning to the Enjoyment of God?

Emil. Sir, I thank you for the Pains you have taken, and doubt not but God will reward your Charity. I shall return wiser, and I hope better. But to compleat the Favour, be pleas'd to oblige me with your Instructions in Writing. Memory is treacherous, and we often forget those Things that should always be remembered: Besides, the Benefit is too important to be confined to a private Person. My Disease is Epidemical, and you will find few Ladies in Court untainted: Pray let the Remedy be publick. I will send it to the Press with your Leave, and present it to our Sex with a Dedication.

Euseb. You may command me, I will leave the Papers at your Disposal, upon Condition you conceal my Name, for I have no Inclination to new Engagements. Some may complain the Physick is too strong, and then the Doctor is in Danger to be greeted with the Title of *Ignoramus*, or *Mountebank*. Now such a Sentence pronounc'd by one Lady, will certainly prejudice my Practice, and ruin my Fortune: For a Physician's Skill rises and falls by the Opinion of Ladies. *Emilia* and *Lucia* after some Compliments took leave of *Eusebius*, and drove Home. They were as calm as a spring Morning, and of Enemies became *Eusebius's* Admirers.



DIALOGUE VIII.

Eusebius instructs Leander in the Duty of a Soldier.

WHEN the Ladies were gone, *Eusebius* set down to Dinner with *Neander*, and invited him to spend some part of the Evening in the *Park*. We have been (said he with a Smile) upon hard Service this Morning, I have almost talk'd my self down; let us breath a little fresh Air in the *Park*, and reinforce our Spirits, methinks mine begin to droop, and call for Relaxation.

Nean. I'll

Nean. I'll wait upon you. Age and Labour work up on the Body; I wonder not your Spirits run low, Discourse with Life and Vigour drains the Arteries: However you are not exhausted, and I believe you have a sufficient Fund of Vitals behind, to furnish another Conversation. Zeal buoys up Nature, and repairs the Decays of Age. And now they were taking Coach, when in comes a Gentleman call'd *Leander*. This was he who undertook the Combat against *Eusebius*, and was deputed by the Club of Debauchees to ask Satisfaction. He was a Man of Quality and Title; he bore a considerable Command in the Army, and made no contemptible Figure at Court. He had a Sense of Religion, but his Morals answer'd not the Purity of his Faith. However, his youthful Sallies sprung rather from Frailty than Malice, and he was carried down the Stream of Sensuality, rather by the Persuasion of ill Company, than by the Inclination of Nature. When he had rioted away his Innocence, he still kept good Principles, and could not applaud those Crimes he had the Weakness to commit. Nay, his Conscience never permitted him to sin without a Reproach: So that he was sure to pay dearly in his Chamber, for the Liberties he took in the Tavern. He always sinn'd with a Check, and one might read Concern in his Forehead, and Guilt in his Face. *Eleutherius* would needs play the Exorcist, and lay the Devil of Conscience as he term'd it. Come *Leander*, (said he,) cast off these Qualms, and leave puking, we live by Meat and Drink, (as they say,) and Flesh and Blood will never thrive upon School-Subtleties and Notions. When thou canst bring all Men to be of one Mind, all Judgments to meet upon the same Point, and all Consciences to the same Gage, then thou mayst begin to think of Futurities: But till this be done, lay hold of the present, and turn Conscience upon the Common; keep it low, and it will leave winning. This Flight of Libertinism grated upon *Leander's* Hearing, he could not bear the Impiety without a Blush, and tho' he smother'd the Resentment, his Concern was no less. For shame always accompanied his Transgressions, and he could not endure to hear People defend one Crime with another, or authorize Transgressions by ridiculing Religion.

But

But the last Night's Expedition quite turn'd his Stomach; he could by no means digest such a Mess of Curses, and those Volleys of Blasphemies rung so dismal a Peal in his Ears, that he thought himself in Hell among the wretched Crew of the damn'd, and from this Moment he resolv'd to take up, and to bid farewell to those unlawful Pleasures, that first lead to Atheism, and then plunge the Sinner into eternal Torments. He had heard of *Eusebius*, and concluded him to be a Man of Merit and Piety, because *Eleutherius* lampoon'd him. For what (said he) can such finish'd Rakes applaud but Vice, or buffoon but Vertue? When therefore the *Cabal* determin'd to attack *Eusebius*, he embraced the Occasion, and offer'd his Person for the Encounter: But his Intention was not to argue, but to learn; to receive Instruction, not to Hectör.

At his Arrival he inform'd *Eusebius* of his Errand, he declar'd his Name, Quality, Circumstance and Resolution.

Eusebius declin'd the Task as much as Civility would permit: He told him he was better provided to receive, than to give Instruction; but *Leander* press'd upon him too hard to receive a Denial. At last Importunity overcame the old Gentleman, and he began thus. You are a Soldier and a Courtier, so that your Business lies in the Field, or St. James's: In Summer you lodge under a Tent, in Winter at Court: We will first cut you out Employment for the Campaign.

I.

Euseb. Courage is the *Diana* of Soldiers, it's a kind of Camp Divinity, and all from the General to the private Centinel pay it Homage, and almost Adoration: It's therefore your Interest not to be led away by Notions flush'd by Error, and fram'd by Caprice. Remember one Vertue is never at Variance with another, they live in Amity, and entertain a good Correspondence: But you may as soon strike Fire out of Ice, as Valour out of Crimes. Sin alone arms Death with Terror, Innocence dares provoke it; and even charge thro' Hell: For Death can only take from pious Christians a Life they must surrender to Nature; its Power only reaches the Body, and its Dominion expires with our last Breath. If you Ambition the repute of a valiant Man, make sure of Vertue;

Vertue ; put no Stress on a fiery Constitution, that rises and falls with the *Barometer*; a Courage that depends on Seasons is precarious, and can be no more trusted than the Winds ; it oft'ner flows in the Tavern than in the Field, and looks more sternly on an Enemy's Back, than on his Face:

II.

Provide, *Leander*, for the Christian: If you miscarry under this Character, that of the Soldier will scarce rescue you ; The Colonel will be uneasy if the Christian be damn'd, nor will all the *Bravo's* of his Regiment retrieve his Misfortune ; stand therefore on your own Guard, and be as ready to meet Death, as to Encounter the Enemy. Death, dear Sir, makes its Approaches by surprize, and attacks by Mine and Stratagem, it works out of Sight, and often Assaults without Signal : I must tell you too, it hates Capitulation, it takes in the vanquish'd at Discretion, and will not here of a *Cartel*: Nay, it distinguishes not the General from a common Trooper, and has no regard to Dignity or Commission. So that neither the *Duke*, nor the *Marshal* will be permitted to trip back to *London* or *Paris* upon their *Parole*. When once Death has arrested you, nothing remains but Hell or Heaven, and both Eternal. This Uncertainty of Death, made our Saviour so often preach Care and Caution. He bids us stand continually upon our Guard, and counsels us as a Friend, to prepare against an Enemy, so audacious, and at the same time so undermining. And certainly, if this Advice be seasonable for all Mankind, it must be very proper for Soldiers, for they not only run the common Hazards of Men, but also those that wait upon their Profession. They carry about them the Principles of a thousand Distempers, and at every Step stumble upon foreign Dangers, never foreseen, and seldom avoided. Sometimes you beat up the Enemies Quarters, sometimes he returns to the Charge. If you give him a *Camisade*, he comes upon you with a *Reveil Matin*: Yet whether you assail, or are assailed, you are equally within the Reach of Danger, and nothing but Hazard can protect you: For whoever comes in the Way of Bombs and Bullets, leaves Security behind him. Keep therefore your self clear of Sin, you will Fight with a good Heart, if a good Conscience follows

shows you to the Engagement, and will either come off a Conqueror, or fall a Hero. But if Crimes draw upon the Soul, whilst Muskets and Artillery play upon the Body, Fortitude will not long stand by you: Courage without a good Conscience trembles at Hell, and leaves a Man dispirited when he most needs Support. For who will charge an Enemy through Smoak and Fire, that fears the next Moment to plunge into everlasting Sulphur? If therefore you have a Mind to Fight well, resolve to Live well, and whilst you have Time, think of a Provision beyond the Grave.

III.

Live not in the Camp like a *Spahi* or *Janisary* at the *Othoman* Port, merely for Interest or Glory. Such Pagan Motives are below the Dignity of a Christian Cavalier. Level your Pretensions above such base Views, and make Advantage of Labour and Merit. Can't you serve your Prince, benefit your Country, oblige Posterity, deserve the Applause of Men, and a Reward in Heaven? Can you not be as brave out of a Sense of Duty, as of Vanity or Interest? Will your Pay be less, because you expect a Gratification hereafter? Will your Actions be less glorious, because they receive a Lustre from Vertue? Raise up then your Ambition to this noble Height; strike at this charming Mark, it's worth the while, and fits the Character of a Christian. But it's a Madness beyond Frenzy to drudge like Slaves in the Quarries, or Metal Mines, or espouse continual Dangers, to resign the Satisfaction of Life, for Noise and Ceremony, for a few Crowns, or a Place in the *Gazette*, or an airy Huzza of insignificant Mortals, who praise by Chance, and blame at Random; who side with Temerity against true Courage, and always pronounce in Favour of successful Rashness against unfortunate Prudence and Bravery.

Notwithstanding this bewitching Phantome fascinates Soldiers; it heats their Brain, and anvils out a thousand Contrivances. Neither Rhetorick is able to Harangue 'em, nor Logick to reason 'em out of this unchristian Humour: It's the least reasonable, and most childish of all our Follies. To court Death in Earnest, for a Life purely in Fancy, to fling up all the Advantages of this World, and run headlong upon all the Terrors of the other for a Panegyrick, is to bottom our *Summum bonum*

num on Opinion, and to be happy at others Courtesy. Applause is a very Indigent, or a very ill-natur'd Thing; it leaves us where it finds us, and cannot, or will not retrieve the most insignificant Misfortune. Pray in what King's Reign did it fill an empty Pocket? When did it set a disjointed Estate? When did it command a disorder'd Pulse to beat even? Or recal a Man from his Grave? Alas! the Expectation of this Life at *second Hand*, can only draw fine Landscips in the Imagination, and crown the Brain with diverting Thoughts. Now a moderate Dose of *Opium* will do the Business with less Hazard than a Stab, and at less Expence than the Forfeiture of Life and Limb.

You intend not, I suppose, to carry Bravery beyond that of the Duke of *Luxemburg*, nor dispute Conduct with matchless *Turenne*: No, believe me, Sir, you will fall short a Bars length at least of the first, and will scarce come within Cannon-Shot of the second; and yet these mighty Heroes sleep in their Graves. The admir'd Panegyrick of *de la Rue* could not awake the Duke, nor the swimming Periods of *Flecbier* revive the Viscount. Their brave Actions that fill'd the *Gazettes* of the last Age, may perchance appear in the Theatre towards the End of this, and if it please the Poet not for Triumph, but Condemnation. But, alas! the Dead are not greater for the Esteem of the Living, nor less for their Censure. If a vertuous Motive animated the Enterprizes of these famous *Generals*, they have received a Reward; if a vitious one, they feel the Punishment. Fight therefore in a good Cause, with a clear Conscience, and a holy Motive, like a Christian, not like a *Mamuluke*, or Pagan: Provide for your Soul, and God will provide for your Honour; if your Name be forgot in the Annals of time, it will make a noble Figure in those of Eternity. Those invincible Squadrons of Martyrs, who in the Eye of the World lived in Contempt, and died in Dishonour, who were lash'd like Slaves, and executed as Criminals, are crown'd with immortal Glory in Heaven, and their very Memory breaths perfumes on Earth, whilst their Persecutors groan in Flame; and God seems to have convey'd down their Names to Posterity only for their Punishment, and our Instruction.

Lean. You

Lean. You advise me to stand for a good Cause: Is it the Subjects Business to enter into the Secrets of the Cabinet, to examine the Results of the Privy Counsel, and to set up a single Opinion against a Royal Declaration? With Submission, I always thought it the Duty of Subjects to obey, not to dispute with Superiors; they must be suppos'd to command what is Just, till their Injunctions appear *evidently* Unjust. For in *doubtful Cases*, Presumption stands for the Government; and this deference we indispensably owe to Authority, otherwise I see not how the chief Magistrate can maintain Peace and Tranquility. I confess it's my Opinion, and has always been my Practice.

Euseb. Had all Men kept up to your Principles, less Blood had run from *English* Veins the last Age, and less Coin from their Purses. But when Prince's Prerogatives are clip'd, their Orders question'd by the Multitude, when *Jack* and *Tom* erect Tribunals of *Right* and *Wrong* in every Tavern, and an *Amsterdam Coffee-house* Club usurps the Power of reviewing the Proclamations of *White-Hall*, what can be expected but Tumult and Destruction? When therefore the Government declares War, a Subject must suppose it Lawful, unless he can oppose strict Evidence, and he may Fight with a safe Conscience under his lawful Prince's Standard in this Conjunction. But this is not the present Case; I hinted at a Practice unjust in my Opinion, though ordinary. Young Gentlemen without Employment at Home, try Conclusions Abroad: They pursue Commissions in *Holland*, *France*, and *Germany*, and sell their Service (as Jockies do Horses) to him that bids most, their Swords distinguish not Right from Interest, they stand not upon the Niceties of Casuistry, not trouble themselves with the Notions of Justice, their Business is to secure Money without formalizing upon the Means, and suppose their Cause good, if their Commission be creditable and lucrative.

Lean. Permit me, Sir, to interpose; methinks you bind up unprovided Gentlemen to hard Circumstances, and screw up the Morals of the Gospel some Points too high. Suppose I plead hard for a Regiment under *Philip* the V. but falling short of my Expectation, I address myself to *Charles* the III. and obtain a Commission; is this Conduct sinful.

Euseb. Had you been pleased to have suffer'd me to proceed, you had received an Answer to this *Quære*. I therefore explain my Mind thus: An *Englishman* has no dependance on foreign States, and therefore cannot enter into their Quarrels at Random, he must be convinc'd, before he draws his Sword, the Parties Right stands upon fair Reasons, and plausible Grounds; for an Officer thus in Commission, is a kind of *Lawyer*, with this only Difference, that the one pleads his Clients Cause at the Bar, the other in the Field; the one with his Tongue, the other with his Sword; and as no *Lawyer* can undertake the Defence of a Cause destitute of Proofs, that found a rational Probability; so no Gentleman can enter into an extern Service without a previous Information of the Justice of the Quarrel he engages to defend. Now tho' it be certain, that if *Philip* has Right to the *Spanish Monarchy*, *Charles* has none; and that if this Prince has, *Philip* is an Usurper, (for two can have no Right at the same time to the same thing,) yet, because *Jurists* are divided upon the Question, and both support their Title by probable Arguments, a Stranger may side with either, but then he cannot theer off from one to the other. For then he is sure to espouse the *Wrong* against the *Right*, because Justice stands not for both. I caution'd you against this Game of *Fast* and *Loose*, Under-Officers often play at. It's neither Gentile nor Christian, choose your Side in God's Name, but then let not a fairer Prospect of Advantage draw you over to the Enemy. Indeed this shifting of Colours is rather the Practice of Soldiers than Commanders. But these sometimes are Guilty, and as the Consequences in these are more dangerous, so their Crime is less pardonable.

Lean. I take your Meaning. A Subject must stand up for the Defence of his lawful Prince and Country, against the Attempt of a Foreign Enemy, without entering upon a Disquisition of the Justice of the War. But whoever enters into the Service of a Foreign State, actually engaged in War, must be persuaded upon rational Grounds the War is just. And when he has struck in with one Side, he cannot retreat to the other during the same War, unless he receives new Information.

Euseb. You comprehend me.

Lean. I am of your Opinion, and subscribe to your Reason; for by so doing, we run headlong into a fatal Necessity of upholding *Wrong* against *Right*. For though the Titles of both the Pretendants may carry a fair out-side, yet it's certain, at the bottom, one is defective. Pray now go on.

IV.

Enseb. Wage not War like *Canibals* or *Tartars*, Commission reaches the Guilty, but gives no Power over the Innocent. Soldiers may come within the Statute of Murder, as well as Pads on the Highway, and may be as Guilty of Thefts as *Eve-droppers* or *Cut-purses*. *Thou shalt not Murder, thou shalt not Steal*, are comprehensive Precepts, they take in the Camp, as well as the City, and are no less binding in the Field, than in Winter-Quarters. Keep therefore your Men up to Order and Discipline, and as you reward their Valour, so punish their Crimes. Look upon *Maradures* as a Nuisance to the Camp, as a Shame to the Profession, and a Plague to Mankind. They must not be countenanc'd as Soldiers, but executed as Felons. They should receive no better Quarter from their Officers, than they give the Peasants, nor find more Mercy when taken, than they shew when they rife Villages. *Who hinders not a Crime (says Seneca) commits it.* The Rapes and Violences of a Soldier rebound on the indulging Commanders, and by Connivance they adopt them.

The great *Belisarius* has left Generals a noble Model, and points out a short, but sure Way to Victory. *Know Companions (said he) I am come to Fight, not so much with Weapons of Steel, as with the Arms of Justice and Religion: Without these, how can we expect Victory, or hope for Success? My Camp shall not be polluted with Rapine, nor your Swords with Cruelty. Without Justice Courage is weak, and a wicked Hero will turn his Back to an innocent Toward.* This short Harangue aw'd the Soldier, and righted him into Respect and Modesty. Nay, it raised the General so high in the Esteem of all the *Italians*, that 's hard to determine, whether they admired more his Conduct and Bravery, or his Discipline. The very *Slaves* loved the *Legionaries*, as their Brethren, and almost ador'd the General as a tutelar Divinity. Never can undertake greater Things with a less Army, nor

came of with more Glory. With scarce twelve thousand Soldiers he clear'd *Africa* of Tyrants, and *Italy* almost of the *Goths*; he not only retook *Rome*, but subdued *Vindex* at the Head of a hundred thousand Men, and led him Captive to *Constantinople*. Thus we see Success oft'ner follows Order and Discipline, than Numbers, and that Vertue with a small Retinue, over-matches Vice with a greater.

Lean. I confess it were to be wish'd that our Generals had more Authority, and the Soldiers better Discipline. But alas! these Qualities are out of Fashion, and Obedience that once made the Glory of Soldiers, is now become their Shame.

Euseb. If you are unable to bridle the Militia's Insolence, quit your Post, it's better to resign your Commission, than your Innocence; and more safe to lay down your Command, than to forfeit your Soul. He is unfit for Rule, that cannot command Obedience.

I have seen Armies licentious beyond Measure, and insolent to Excess, one would have thought *Attila* with his *Huns* was once more return'd to plague *Christendom*: Terror march'd before the Camp, Desolation accompanied it, and a thousand Imprecations of undone Peasants follow'd it. *Mahomet* could not have acted more bloody Tragedies in *Europe*: Nor the most irritated Christian Prince in *Asia*. They storm'd more Purves than Towns, and wheel'd off from Counterscarps, to assault Hen-Roosts and Sheep-cotes. They seem'd to take the Field, not to Fight, but to Plunder, and whilst the lawless Soldiers scatter'd Ruin with Fire and Sword, the Generals spread Desolation with Safe-guards: So that the Protection of these, was more Expensive than the Avarice of those, and Kindness was no less cruel than Fury. The Disorder was evident, though the Cause of it was disputed; some arraign'd the Weakness, others the Avarice of the Officers, and some the Insolence of the Soldiers. But whilst every one complain'd, the Mischief run on without Limit, and only then a Remedy was applied, when the Disease was past Cure, i. e. when the Country could lose no more, nor the Army gain any more: And yet these fine Pranks were play'd among Friends and Allies. But if Friendship be so chargeable, it's not worth the Pursuit, and I had rather lay my *All* at the Mercy of a Foe, than

than to give it to the Avarice of a Friend ; for I believe he is no richer that is beggar'd by his Protector, than he that is ruin'd by his Enemy. And methinks to be hugg'd, or pistol'd to Death, is an equal Misfortune. You know, Sir, how many *Israelites* fell for the Sacrilege of one Man, and nothing could appease God's Anger, but the Execution of the Offender. How many Armies have melted away into nothing for the same Cause ? Mortality swept away whole Companies without Remedy, and buried Regiments without Honour. Though Soldiers and Officers smile at these Exorbitances, they will hereafter change their Mirth into a more doleful Key, unless they detest with Horror those Injustices, they now applaud with Insolence. You must never draw your Sword but to defend Justice, and a Generals commanding Staff, like the Club of *Hercules*, must always be heaved up to quell Monsters.

V.

Tho' a Soldier's Life be honourable, yet we must grant that of all Professions it's the most miserable. The Prerogative of a private Centinel above a Slave lies only in the Name, and the Advantage, if any, stands for the *Gallerian* : For the Soldier is tied to continual Duty, and like a Vagabond is without House, and often without Cover. He is unprovided of Necessaries to supply his Wants, and of Patience to support 'em without Murmur. Yet he abandons his Friends, bid his Country Farewel, to range about the World (like the wild *Tartars* in Tents) he throws himself upon Poverty under a Foreign Climate, and affronts Death for a Groat a-Day. What an inconsiderable Sallery is here for a Toil so slavish, crowded with such a Multitude of Dangers, and so far removed from the very Hope of Preferment ? Yet some Officers in spite of Laws both Humane and Divine, divide this nothing, and so starve the Soldier to feed their Pride and Debauchery. They live high at others Expence, and carry on the Camp Diversion (Gaming) by Extortion. This *Pandora's Box* pours out a hundred Plagues upon the Army, for the Soldier must live ; if therefore the Captain purloins the Pay, and sets it aside to retrieve an unlucky Cast, or to stop a Camp-Ladies Mouth, must he not draw Bills of Exchange upon the Country, i. e. give the Signal to plunder at Discretion, and upon his Honour promise

promise Impunity? I once took the Liberty to check a Captain for a Conduct so unchristian and unnatural. Faith, Sir, (said he) the Cards run unkindly the other Day, my *Guineas* deserted to the Enemy, and I must Recruit. This is the only Way, and Custom has prevailed. So have (answer'd I) a great many ill Things besides. The highest Extravagances can plead a President, and if this sufficed to authorize an Action, Whores and Rogues would have a fine Time, and these scandalous Professions would become not only reputable, but innocent. But, Sir, Custom without Reason is no better than Vice triumphant.

Besides, it cherishes Desertions, and so inures the Prince as well as the Subject. Who will drudge merely for Bastinado's and Beggary? This is uneasy, and those are neither creditable nor pleasing. Nay, Pain and Misery are insupportable, unless corrected by some sweetning Ingredients, like Pills, they must be gilt to go down: For, believe me, Pain with Soldiers over-rules Duty, and Sense of Indigence works stronger than that of Honour; their Reason is in the Oar, unpolish'd and almost unfit for Service. Discourse and Reflexion run very low with them, and Conscience lower. What then can keep these poor Wretches to their Colours, if their Substance be withdrawn? Nothing in Hand, with nothing in Reversion is Beggary for Life. Such a State is miserable beyond Parallel, it's a kind of Damnation that discards a Man not only of all Comfort, but even of Hope and Expectation, that buoy up the Spirits of Slaves. Their Fortune being so low, they know it cannot sink lower, and then it's natural by shifting Sides to endeavour to be better, and thus we see Regiments grow thin without Battle, without Diseases, and Companies broken by mere Desertion. Severity will never heal this Evil. Despair forces People upon strange Courses. He who receives daily Unkindness from his Officer, and Injustice too, will rather for once venture the Gallows, than continually groan under the Tyranny.

Lean. Why don't the Soldiers complain? They are free-born Subjects, and under the Protection of the Law.

Euseb. Complain when the Plaintiff stands at the Bar, and the Defendant sits on the Bench, on which Side will the Balance turn? The Informer is immediately clap'd up.

up for Mutiny, and thus at the same time he forfeits his Pay, and lays his Life at the Mercy of a *Court-Marshal*. This Camp-Justice is ill-natur'd and quick too; a Man is sent into the other World in a Moment, not for his own, but others Crimes. Good God! To take a Man's Purse, and then to bar him the Liberty to complain; to stretch him on the Rack, and then to Torment him because he Groans, has more of the Tyrant than of the Judge, and favours more of the Officer's Prerogative, than of the Liberty and Property of the Soldiers. It's the Duty of the high Officers to look into the Comportment of the lower; to stop these Grievances by Punishment or Casheering; if they wink at such Offenders, God will not connive at their criminal Indulgence. *Lewis* the XIV. in my Presence, did an Action worthy of his Greatness: Two Soldiers were led to Execution, as he enter'd into the Town; the poor Wretches cry'd out Mercy, and the King stop'd; he enquir'd the Cause of their Punishment, and when he was told they had left their Colours, turning to the Prisoners, Friends (said he) what mov'd you to leave my Service, were you pay'd? They replied, No: He sent for the Officers upon the Spot, examin'd the Accusation, and finding them Guilty, he tore their Commissions, broke their Swords, and pardon'd the Prisoners. This Piece of Justice should stand upon Record for a President, and for an Example to Generals, and for a Terror to under Officers; and were it sometimes practis'd, I believe Desertion might be less frequent, and by Consequence Camp-Executions.

VI.

Treat your Soldiers like Men with Civility, not like Asses with Clubs; Cruelty may break Bones, but will never heal Faults. I have seen the Cane raise Indignation often, but never Sorrow; it fetches out Thoughts of Revenge, but instills no Purpose of Amendment. People may be persuaded by Reason, not beaten by Blows out of their Errors. I was acquainted with a Captain, he was a Man of Punctilio and Ceremony, better at his Tongue than at his Weapon; he swore better than he fought, and was more famous for Caning his Company, than for storming Half-moons. This young Huff commanded a Serjeant to pay him Respect, and follow'd the Command with this quaint *Rodomontade*, B. G. *If you don't*

I'll make a Devil of you. But under his Worship's Favour, his Power answer'd not his Will, in spite of Menace, the Serjeant remain'd a Man, and a Christian, whilst my young Commander put on the Fiend; he was indeed unfurnish'd of Horns and cloven Feet, but under the Shape of a Man he possess'd all the Malice of Satan. He affected Respect, and by exacting it with Haughtiness, and Empire, he fell into Contempt; for the Company huzza'd the Expression, and burlesqu'd my Gentleman by turning it to Ridicule. Nay, the Drollery went so far, that the Spark was forc'd to throw up his Commission: And thus instead of Metamorphosing the other into a Devil, he made a Fool of himself. *David* with his Harp cured *Saul*, and play'd down the evil Genius that haunted him; but certainly Curses and Imprecations have not that healing Quality. A Man may swear himself into Hell, but he'll scarce blaspheme another into his Duty; this horrid Custom must be banish'd without Reserve, without Limitation; it's too foul to be skreen'd by any Pretext of Affront or Insolence; it grates upon Hearing; it's dishonourable to our Almighty Creator, and dangerous in Example. Can't an Officer right himself without affronting God? Can't he exact Obedience, without disobeying the Laws of Heaven? Or has he a Mind to correct a Soldier's Offence at the Expence of his own Innocence, and to purchase Respect at the Price of Damnation.

There are other Means to let People know their Distance, without being ill-natur'd, or impious: Put on a handsome Behaviour, let the Soldier have his due, hear his Grievances with Patience, and redress 'em with Expedition. When he offends use reproof oft'ner than the Cane, and correct not one Fault by committing another. Let not *damn'd Dog, Devil, or Son of a Whore* pass your Lips, the Dialect is unbeseeming a Gentleman, and below a Christian. Tho' there be a Difference between a private Centinel, and an Officer, yet such Language magnifies the Inequality beyond Proportion, they are of the same Species, and inherit equally the common Prerogatives of the Kind; they have the same Relation to God, to Reason and Immortality. The Centinel has five Senses, the General has no more; and if the private Soldier be Virtuous, and the Officer Vitious, the whole Advantage lies

on his Side. Indeed one has a Commission, but this is often the Effect of Chance or Money, not of Merit; and though it may set you upon the higher Ground, it adds nothing to your real Worth. The Equality therefore being so even, let not the Treatment be disproportion'd; reflect you speak to Men, not to Beasts; to free-born Subjects, not to Slaves.

Be generous and free, give not too much to Familiarity, nor stand off in Reserve. Be courageous in the Field, moderate in Conversation, and if you model your Conduct by these Rules, Men will esteem your Parts, and respect your Person; but if you intend to bastinado Soldiers into Respect, or to hector 'em into Love, you will miss of your Aim. These are the Effects of Kindness, not of Violence, you may perchance have their Hats, but not their Hearts; they will Fear, but never Love you. Now Fear is commonly the Parent of Hatred, and when this Passion has once seiz'd on the Soldiers, I would counsel the Officer to withdraw, he is less secure among his Guards, than in the Battalions of the Enemy. For Hatred is daring, and seldom fails of doing Mischief when it has the Advantage.

VII.

Leander, Punish Faults in God's Name, but with the Mercy of a Judge, not with the Cruelty of a Tyrant. Convince the Regiment of your Behaviour, Justice pronounced the Sentence, not Passion, and remember Compassion in the Heighth of Severity. Leave some Time between the Sentence and the Execution; who is brought in Guilty to Day, may be found not Guilty to Morrow; it's never too late to execute a Criminal, but always too soon to murder an Innocent. Besides, Death is a Moment on which an Eternity depends. Is it not therefore a Cruelty beyond the Barbarity of Tyrants to throw a poor Creature off the Ladder in a hurry, before he reflects where he is going? Did not Christ redeem a private Centinel as well as a General? Because he has forfeited his Claim to Life, has he no Pretension to Heaven? Give him therefore Time to provide for the Future, that he may be happy in the next World, tho' he goes out of this on a Scaffold. Let him have a Leisure to survey the present State of his Soul, to prepare for a Removal, and to arm himself with Sorrow for the fatal Blow. Furnish

with him a Divine for Comfort and Instruction; a Man under the Apprehension and Terror of Death, wants some Support; Courage alone will not keep him in an equal Situation, nothing but an Atheistical Bravery or Christian Sanctity can sweeten the Passage, and abate its Horror, *i. e.* to receive the Stroke without Concern, we must have led such virtuous Lives as gives us a firm Hope of future Bliss, or believe we end in nothing, and so shall neither be capable of Happiness or Misery.

I believe few Soldiers at this Pinch receive much Relief from the Prospect of their past Lives: For tho' Virtue be their Business, it seldom finds a Place in their Thoughts, much less in their Practice. In the Summer their Minds run upon Sieges, Battels, or Plunder, and are continually on the catch for Booty or Slaughter. In Winter they plunge into Debauchery, and try by indulging Sense to blot out the Memory of past Fatigues: So that their Lives are a Tissue of Robbery or Riot; they live in a State of Sin, and by Consequence march on through daily Transgressions to Damnation.

A poor Creature, who has not sinn'd away the Belief of another World, nor steel'd his Conscience, must be stun'd when he sees Death before him, a thousand unnatural Crimes within him, a Judge upon the Bench ready to pronounce the Sentence, and Devils to execute it; this dismal Prospect will pall his Spirits, and may sooner cast him into Fits of Despair, than into Transports of Sorrow. The Devil will easily persuade him God is as inexorable as the Court-Marshal, and that he will fall from the Gibbet into unquestionable Flames.

Now a charitable Divine may remove these Terrors by opening the Mercies of God, and the boundless Treasures of his Goodness, he may bring him to Repentance by an expressive Representation of the Torments below, and of the Joys above; and will an Officer that professes Christianity, that knows God will treat him in the next World, as he deals with his Brother in this, refuse so small a Condescension?

But if the Criminal be tainted with Atheistical Principles, he may indeed Die without Concern or Apprehension of the Future: But alas! Will the Disbelief of God exempt him from Judgment, or of Hell, from Fire and Brimstone? Tho' an Atheist places God among the Chy-

mera's,

mera's, he is a very real Thing, and tho' he rallies upon Hell, he will scarce laugh out his Flames. No, he will certainly know there is a God by the Sentence of Damnation; and tho' his Reason disown'd a Hell, Sense will confute the Error. Now a little Time, and good Counsel may reclaim such a Creature, and a precipitated Execution will certainly damn him. Is it not worth the while to make a Tentative at least? If he refuse Advice, his Miscarriage will lie at his own Door; if you deny him Time, and an Instructor, God will cast it at yours.

Let him also, if possible, receive the Holy Sacrament, the Means instituted by our Saviour for Salvation are his Right; and whosoever invades this, stands Guilty at God's Tribunal of something more hideous than Murder. God reveng'd the innocent Blood of *Abel* on guilty *Cain*, and will he wink at the Damnation of a Soul? No, no, those who shut the Gate of Mercy against their Brethren, mure it up against themselves, they provoke God to retaliate their Cruelty in the next World, and oftentimes in this; and if he suffers such Monsters to flourish, we may be sure he is angry, for present Impunity is the deepest Revenge, because it forbodes a future Misery. Plead not the Severity of military Laws, no Court of human Justice has Power over Souls, these come not within the Verge of their Jurisdiction. God alone is their lawful Judge, to dispense Rewards, and ordain Punishments is his Prerogative.

VIII.

Procure a Chaplain, that your Regiment may be train'd up in the Discipline of Christ, as well as of *Mars*: But be circumspect in the Choice, receive not those who seek a Sanctuary in the Camp against the Pursuit of their Bishops; such Men are more fit for a Goal, than for the Pulpit, and rather deserve Penance than Preferment. Those who cast off all Care of their own Souls, will scarce take to Heart the Salvation of their Neighbour; and those who run down Vertue in Practice, will not heartily preach it up at the Head of the Regiment. It's more probable they will improve those Vices in the Army they took up in Town, and finish the Debaucheries in *Flanders* they only began in *England*. I saw the Chaplain of an *Hannoverian* Regiment, run twice the Gauntlet in a publick Street, and then turn'd out of his Regiment for his Behaviour.

haviour. Indeed the Punishment was extraordinary, but his Manners deserv'd it, and the Officers concluded nothing but a publick Animadversion was able to atone for the Heinousness of the Scandal. How are Men that want Reformation likely to reform Soldiers? They may open the Gate to Disorders, and scatter the Plague they carry about 'em, but will never stop the Current of one Vice, either by Counsel or Instruction.

You must have a Man of an approv'd Vertue, whose Example edifies as well as his Tongue, and who (tho' he preaches well) lives better. A Man that neither flatters the Pride of some, nor keeps pace with the unwarrantable Ambition of others; who neither courts Greatness, nor fawns on Dignity, but is above all the little Views of Interest and Pleasure. A Man who hopes for nothing, will fear nothing, he will no more pardon Vice in Commission, than in the Sentry-Box, and will no more suffer the Excesses of a Colonel, than of a private Soldier. A Man that matches Zeal with Prudence, and knows how to time Reproof, and nick Exhortation, will do Wonders, tho' he works no Miracle; he will neither stretch his Patent out of Arrogance, nor shrink it out of Baseness and Servility; but will keep up to his Character, and maintain the Dignity of his Post, and the Prerogative of his Profession, and indeed who does otherwise exposes himself to Contempt, renders his Instructions insignificant, and makes himself despicable and cheap.

What a Reformation would a Chaplain thus equip'd make in a Regiment? No Vice would withstand his Zeal, no Sin appear in his Presence, his Words would be receiv'd like Oracles by the Soldiers, and the whole Regiment would fear him as a Censor, and love him as a Father; and when once a Soldier is taught to live well, he is fit for any Enterprize: For whoever dares look the other World in the Face, will charge thro' all the Terrors of this.

IX.

When the General commands you upon Service, receive his Orders with Submission, and execute 'em with Valour; regard less the Difficulty of the Enterprize, than your Duty; and when you have done your part, leave the Event to Providence. Success oftentimes lies out of our Reach, and forsakes Prudence and Valour to wait

on Temerity, lay your Designs with Wisdom, carry 'em on with Resolution, and you have discharg'd your Duty.

Expose not your Person out of a mere Punctilio, nor refuse a Post out of a Prospect of Danger; Life is more valuable than Grimace, and less than Reputation. It's worth coming into the World to make a handsome and honourable *Exit*, and more creditable for a Cavalier to fall in the Field, than to come off with Infamy.

I laugh at those fiery Hot-spurs, who (like *Salamanders*) can only breathe in Smoak and Flames; they are never well but when they stand within an Inch of Ruin; they are for trying a Rubber at Loggerheads with Cannon-Bullets, and for knocking out their Brains against Half-Moons and Bastions; nay, they cannot live out of the Reach of the Enemies Batteries, and are ready to expire out of Fear of living too long; they dun the General to be sent upon every Attack, when neither Duty nor Prudence require their Service; and like the *Indian Women*, who rave to cast themselves upon their Husband's Funeral Pile, bear a Repulse with Indignation. Now in my Judgment this is to mistake Courage for Temerity, and to place Bravery in Folly.

J. W. was of this Temper; he bore a Command in the Cavalry, yet in spite of Dissuasion would leave his Horse to court Honour on Foot, he storm'd a *Counter-scarp*, and was the first Man that fell in the Action; he run on without Reason, and was brought off without Life, without Reputation; all pitied his Misfortune, tho' no Body excus'd his Conduct, some stiled him *Brave*, but not one durst venture to call him *Prudent*. Bullets distinguish rash Volunteers in the Crowd, and Providence seems to withdraw its Protection from Straglers, and to leave 'em to the Government of another Influence.

I know indeed we throw this Heat on a Pretence of Preferment. We must, cry they, distinguish our selves from the Crowd, and do more than our Fellows to plead Merit. A Soldier indeed must look above his own Station, he who confines his Desires to a moderate Post, deserves none; to be content with a mean Commission marks a narrow Soul, and ungenerous Inclination; it's a Symptom of more Flegm than Heat, and that he is rather cut out for a Shop, than for the Camp. Distinguish therefore your self (in God's Name) but affect not to be

be remarkable for Folly : Tho' *Bedlam* be in the Way to *Hogsdon*, certainly it lies out of the Road to *Promotion*. Life was given by our Almighty Creator for a noble End, and therefore we must not expose it foolishly ; I would no more throw it up out of a Bravado, than out of a Pet, nor Sacrifice it rashly in a Fight, more than in a Duel.

But when a noble Occasion presents ; an Occasion that will stand the *Ordeal* of Reason, and can be pleaded to Advantage, tho' it be not follow'd by Success, let it not slip by, but lay hold of it with Joy and Transport, and thank the General for the Honour of the Opportunity. Exert a Resolution equal to the Difficulty, and do to the Height of the Enterprize. Discover nothing that is low, nothing that is boisterous, nothing that argues Fear, or betrays Presumption ; be more solicitous how to go on, than how to come off, and take a greater Care of your Carriage, than of your Life. These Occasions are not rare in our modern Camps ; they open a fair Prospect to Preferment, by giving Matter to Courage and Merit to work upon, and tho' we fall, it's in the Discharge of our Duty, and such a Man may look this World in the Face, and what is more, the other too, if nothing else hinders. To Die in the Defence of our Post is honourable in the Sight of Men, and of God also, if we refine our Motive, and dispute our Ground out of a Point of Duty : Nay, it's an easy Passage, tho' violent, for a Bullet or a Rapier does our Business more gently than a Fever.

X.

If your Merit raises you to the noble Degree of General, let your Zeal for your Prince fly as high as your Station ; Favours call for Gratitude, and a Subject can only return this natural Duty by Service. Remember in the first place you are to act as a publick Person, and therefore no private Design must regulate your Conduct. The Honour of a brave Action may carry you off, but your Master must go away with the Profit.

High Posts are intoxicating, they often fly up to the Brain, and turn our Heads ; they take away the Memory of our former State, and persuade us we are not Men so soon as we become great. Tho' we are never so big, such a Conceit makes us little, and gives a convincing Proof, that our Judgment falls short of our Dignity. Alas ! these ornamental Privileges are but a decent Van-

nish

nish that lies on the Superficies; they are a Royal Impression stamp'd upon us; but this changes not the Metal, this gives no intrinsic Value, but either supposes Merit or Favour: Besides such an over-weening Conceit of your self is a Mark of Pride. Now this, tho' practis'd by all, is hated by every one, it tempts even those who made you great, to make you less, and draws your Friends to be Enemies, it will alienate your Officers, and if you have not their Hearts, you will want their Hands upon Occasion. For whoever wishes another lower, will endeavour to bring him down.

Beware of Rashness; this is the Bane of Generals, yet they easily slip into it, because it often carries the Appearance, and borrows the very Name of Courage; however it's of another Race, and nothing allied to that Virtue; the one descends in a direct Line from Prudence, the other from Folly and Presumption. Success seldom waits on Temerity, twice I find it prosperous and triumphant, in *Asia* under *Alexander* the Great, and in *G.* under *Aurelius* the First; (as *Curtius* notes) by his Rashness won an Empire, and the second almost lost one. But these Examples are rare, and the Captain that frames his Conduct by theirs, steers by Hazard, and will not likely find Fortune so favourable.

Go upon the surest Method Prudence and Thought can suggest, leave nothing (if possible) to Chance. It's true indeed, you will not engage so often, but then you will seldom be overcome. Now methinks it's wiser to keep ones Ground, than out of Presumption and Eagerness to lose it. Take therefore as sure Measures as if you put no Confidence in Valour, but when you come to Action, fight as if you trusted in your Sword alone. Courage may be trapann'd, but seconded by Caution and Conduct it's invincible. But if Numbers over-top you, if Chance out-wits Prudence, and Multitude bears down Vertue. In fine, if you are forced to abandon the Field, and to leave Victory behind, you may carry off your Honour untouched, and may stand the Stroak of Satyr or Calumny, without a Blush.

Fortune is unstable, neither constant to her Friends, nor implacable to her Enemies, never long in the same Situation, never true to the same Interest, now on this Side, now on that, but faithful to neither, and suspected by

by all. You must therefore expect a Mixture of bad and good Success, now Victory will perch on your Standards, now 'twill fly over to your Enemies; sometimes you will conquer, and sometimes you will be overcome. Generals always march in a Circle of Prosperity and Misfortune; let not one swell your Confidence too big, not the other shrink your Courage; neither presume nor despond; in the one State fear a Check, in the other hope for an Advantage.

A Victory that intoxicates the Conqueror, is more dangerous than a Defeat, it disarms Caution, instills Negligence, and lulls us asleep with a traiterous Security; now whosoever lies under these Disadvantages, stand at the Mercy of an Enemy, and tho' he leads an Army of Lions, 'twill be routed by another of Stags.

What lost *U. M.* at *To.* but this haughty Humour? Success had turn'd his Brain, and dismounted his Reason; he fought a Battle, and won Applause, but tho' he brought off *U. M.* he left the General behind. He was no more the same Man, his usual Prudence abandon'd him, the Vapours of Pride smok'd and smother'd him out of Counsel and Caution, so that at *To.* he lost the Day before the Fight began. Never any Man rang'd his Men with less Judgment, nor took more disadvantageous Ground, one Wing was unable to succour the other, the Foot was of no Support to the Horse; one would have thought he play'd Booty, and resolv'd to try the Chagrin of a Defeat.

On the other Side, a Captain must not sink under a Misfortune: To suppose all lost, is a short way to lose all in earnest. When Fortune is at a low Ebb, expect it will soon flow, and when it frowns, hope it will quickly smile. The brave Duke *Weymar* receiv'd a dismal Check from the Imperialists, but tho' his Troops were overthrown, his Heart was not overcome; nay, his Courage rose with his Fall, his Pulse beat higher, and he resolv'd the next Day to wash out the Disgrace of the former, with the Blood of his Conquerors: He kept his Word, and gain'd an intire Victory, and *Brisac*, as the Price of Resolution: So that the News of his Victory overtook that of his Loss, and his Glory posted thro' *Europe* as swift as his Misfortune. Had he not lain under a Cloud, his Merits had shined less; the Disgrace of the first Day, redoubled the Glory of the second.

I hate

I hate those Generals who drill on Wars out of Pride and Interest; they may be good Soldiers, but cannot be good Christians; they make the Interest of the Prince truckle to their own, and sacrifice the publick Tranquility to their private Ends. Provinces must welter in Blood, and Cities flame, to crowd your Antichamber with Visitants that fawn on your Dignity, not on your Person; and are as ready to bow to your Lacquey (had he a Commander's Staff) as to your self. Must People groan under all the Pangs of Poverty to pay your Safeguards? And agonize under Hunger to furnish your Table? That you may be necessary to the State, the Subject must be fleec'd by Taxes, and Commerce sink to raise your Fortune. Perchance such a Conduct may nick with Policy, but it bids Defiance to the Gospel. The Marshal *de Byron* was of this Humour; for when his Son prosecuted a Victory, *Halt* (cries he) *have you a mind to plant Cabbages at Byron?* This Man had much of your petty Surgeons, who never close a Patient's Wound, till they have drain'd his Purse. He had drawn much Christian Blood, and in the End spilt his own in a Skirmish. Believe me, *Leander*, it's more glorious to end a War with Advantage, than to continue it with Bravery; and I would more respect a General without Attendance in a Hackney, that has obliged a Nation with a Peace, than him who rides at the Head of an Army in Triumph, and plunges it into an expensive War.

This is a Summary of your Duty, and I could wish our Soldiers would spend some cool and serious Thoughts upon the Subject; they would not (I am confident) fight worse, and might die better. How often have I pitied the Blindness of our Men, they encounter'd Danger like Lions, they fought like Hero's, and expir'd like Beasts; they had no Concern for this Life, and no Thought of the other; Ignorance had so powerfully seiz'd on their Understanding, they quite forgot the Interest of Eternity. Ah, *Leander*, if you value not Life, be tender at least of your Soul, it was made for Glory, why will you give it over to Torments?

Leand. These Precepts, if obligatory, are very seasonable; but our Officers will not easily own they concern the Camp; I am sure they are not in use, and am apt to think they have been repeal'd by a Court Marshal, or are fallen

fallen by Prescription. Nay, the Camp, as well as *Black-Fryers*, is a privileg'd Ground, and as Mr. *Hobbs* maintain'd the Gospel did not bind any Common-wealth till receiv'd by the Magistrate, so some are of Opinion it must not come within a League of the Army, without a Passport from the General. Indeed a Red Coat seems to exempt us from the Incumbrance of Divine Precepts, for we govern our Conduct not by the *Civil*, but wholly by the *Cannon Law*. Our Business is to make the most of this Life, without any Thought of the Future; we feed high till our Purse runs low; we pamper Nature, and drink down Reason, dice away our Pay, and send a File of Curses after it; and thus we revel away one Part of our Time, and blaspheme away the other, till a Bullet, or a Stab, packs us away into the other World without Warning, and (what is worse) without Preparation.

Euseb. Without Preparation do you say? That's a Mistake; for you must know, our Men of War have voted a *Turkish* Principle free Denizon of the Gospel, *Viz.* *That whoever dies for his Prince, suffers for Religion*; this Persuasion, I assure you, gets Ground, and may in Time be improv'd to a fundamental Point of the Soldiers Religion. When I was in the Army, an Officer, the very Scandal of the Camp, was wounded, he had no Sense of God, no Tincture of Religion, and his Life squar'd exactly with his Belief. Well *Tom*, said I to his Man, How does thy Master?

He is in Rest, reply'd he.

In Rest (said I) did he make his Peace with God?

No (answered *Tom*.) he breathed out his Soul with a Curse. *But he died in the King's Service.*

In the King's Service (said I) is that sufficient?

Sufficient (reply'd *Tom*.) Ay, my Life for yours. Why, Sir? He died in the Bed of Honour. The Simplicity of the Fellow forced me to smile, and his Ignorance to weep. He had heard his Betters preach this Doctrine, and he espous'd it without Examen; and indeed it's the Officer's Interest to send it round, for if once it be well establish'd, Recruits will come in Shoals without Beat of Drum, or the Trouble of Kidnapping: For, I assure you, good Pay, Pleasure, and Impunity, and Heaven in the Reer, are powerful Attractives. Who would not venture a Stab, or charge up to a Cannon Mouth for such a Crowd of

Advantages.

But

But alas! Sir, when People sport with Religion, and burlesque those Things they should revere, it's a Sign they have discarded Principles, and are resolv'd to die like the *Beasts that perish*.

Leand. Do you think Religion is banish'd the Camp? Why, Sir, I fear we have rather too much than too little.

Euseb. The Camp is divided into two Bodies, yet tho' they run different Ways, they meet in the End. Some are for all Religions, and then how can they be in the wrong? Those Gentlemen's Church, like a *Cheddar-cheese*, is made of the Milk of one-and-twenty Parishes. Others deny all Religions, and those can hardly be in the right; yet after all, at the bottom they are all Brethren, and of the same Communion. For Soldiers, in *Tom's Divinity*, whoever they are, and whatever they are, (provided they serve the King) are God's People, and the Wolves and Sheep make up the same Fold.

But in good earnest, Sir, setting Raillery apart, those Notions of Religion are hideous in a poor Brazilian, they move Pity and Compassion, but I cannot hear an *Englishman* vent such Stuff without Indignation. Example and Immorality have spread the Contagion, why may not the vertuous and regular Behaviour of Officers stop the Infection? Vertue I believe is catching as well as Vice, and as capable of being dilated by Example; the Matter is of Concern, and deserves a Trial, and I know no Man more qualified to begin the Experiment than your self: Your Post gives you Authority and Respect, and as it raises you above the Crowd, so it exposes your Actions to the View of the Publick, and if they breath Piety, the Perfume may reach and charm your Inferiors; and if once they gain so far as to be approv'd, Imitation follows; for the Passage from one to the other is short and easy.

Leand. I will endeavour to live up to the Principles of Religion, and to wash out the Stains of my former Life by a thorow Reformation. I will countenance Vertue, and keep under Discipline the publick Professors of Impiety, and proclaim Regularity the Way to Promotion in my Regiment.

Euseb. If you can draw over to your Resolution the great Officers of the Army, the Method will take. Condemn Debauchery once or twice to the Gauntlet, and 'twill sculk

sculk in the Dark, and withdraw to Privacy, for who will dare to abet it in Publick, when he knows he shall be mark'd with Infamy, and feel the just Indignation of his Officer? And then if Goodness be rewarded in this World, as well as in the other, if there be no Way to rise but by Vertue, and he be the highest in the General's Favour, who is most in God's? Men will carry on their Pretensions not by Bluster or Blasphemy, but by the more warrantable Methods of Piety. They will make Goodness the Step to Greatness, and deserve a Commission before they have it. Nay, I dare promise Success to all your Enterprizes, if once the Army be model'd by Vertue; for besides that God watches over his Friends, and takes 'em under his Protection; Vice is a Coward, and no Man dares look Death in the Face, that fears to be damned. But Vertue that dreads nothing in the next World, fears nothing in this but Sin.

I wish you Success, and altho' your Design miscarries, the Undertaking is heroical; for it's more noble to storm Impiety, than to carry a Town, and I had rather bring a Regiment to the Service of God, than force a Province to the Obedience of a Prince. You must expect Opposition, for Vice is stubborn, and loses Ground by Inches. Nothing but Force and Constancy can gain upon it, Flesh and Blood will strike in with it, Custom and Example will go over to the same Interest; but if you bear up with Resolution, if you carry on the Attack with Courage, and flag not in the Execution, the Advantage will lie on your Side; and tho' the Victory be not compleat, the Glory of the Action will. Well, Sir, (continued *Ensebius* with a Smile) we have taken a sufficient View of the Camp, it's Time now to return to Court.

Leand. I wait upon you, and shall be glad of your Company; for tho' the King has been pleas'd to favour me lately with an Office, yet I am unacquainted with the Ground, and a mere *Ignoramus* in the Ceremonial of Behaviour. I fear sometimes to be too much for Ceremony, sometimes too little, and that I drop Smiles when I should let fall a Frown.

DIALOGUE IX.

Eusebius instructs Leander in the Duties of a Courtier.

Euseb. **T**HE Court has been the Subject of a Thousand Satyrs, and the Theme of as many Panegyrics, and if Invective has misrepresented it on the one Hand, Flattery has overflourish'd it on the other. If we believe those, like the Sea, it's in a perpetual Motion, and as infamous for Shipwracks, as *Sylla* and *Charybdis*; it's a kind of a Turkish *Marmora* inhabited by Slaves, who have lost their Wits with their Liberty, and hug their Chains because they glitter: In fine, it's the Palace of Vice, the Seat of Misery; and if by Chance Virtue shews its Face, it's only saluted with Sarcasm and Raillery.

But if we credit its Admirers, Lord, how the Character varies! One would think Men could not draw so different Features in the same Face. Those Gentlemen represent it with another Air; every Stroke marks Greatness, every Dash of the Pencil Majesty, and Charm; it's a Commonwealth (like that of the *Romans*) compos'd of Grandeur and Merit. The First-rate Officers are *Princes*, and the lowest, *Knights* at least. The Air, like that of *Ireland*, is mortal to Toads and Spiders. Nothing that disoblige the Eye, or grates upon the Ear, or ruffles the Senses, can pass the Porter's Lodge. Care, Solitude, and Melancholy, have no Access, and those Misfortunes that wait on other People, fly from Courtiers, so that they only know Miseries by others Ruin. In fine, in one Man's Fancy the Court is a Hell, in another's a Heaven. We are miserable in it if we believe some, and cannot be happy out of it, if we credit others.

But, with Submission, all are mistaken, some throw too much Dirt upon the Court, others too much Lustre; some paint it too black, others too white, and they are no less guilty who magnify its Faults, than those who enlarge beyond Measure upon its Perfections. For in a Word, the Court is not all Guilt, nor all Innocence; it's stain'd with great Vices, and adorn'd with great Vertues; it teaches to live well, and tempts to do ill. Some make

in it great Fortunes, and others ruin greater. There is Pleasure, and there is Pain, Glory, and Reproach; Hope lodges in one Apartment, and Despair in another; in fine, it's a Soil over-run with Poisons and Fertile in Antidotes: So that a Man must stand upon his Guard, and walk with Reserve and Caution. He must beware of a treacherous Confidence, and arm himself against a cowardly Pusillanimity. I doubt not, Sir, but you have examin'd the Map of this new World, and made a Provision of Necessaries for your Voyage; you are embark'd for the Temple of Honour, the Road is intricate and beset with Dangers, the Journey long.

Leand. I have, God be thank'd, the Education of the University and Academy; I handle my Sword not ill; *Corelli* has taught me to play, and *Abel* to sing: And besides I am a Gentleman: These Advantages suit with my Circumstances, and I presume they will in time improve my Fortune, and raise me to a Post of Honour.

Euseb. Nay, Sir, your Equipage is glorious, you have laid in with Profusion for your Journey, and if you miscarry, Fortune alone must bear the Blame of the Disappointment. A Man that pleads for *Preferment* with *Escutcheon* and *Title*, with the Sword in one Hand, and such Accomplishments in the other, must undoubtedly carry the Suit: For here are Arguments of all Complexions; some are tipt with Authority, others flash Terror, and some again shoot Charms. Now unless his Majesty's Breast be faced with Steel, he will yield to such battering Engines, and never dispute the conferring of a Dignity courted with so much Bravery, and woo'd with so much Harmony and Sweetness.

But for all that, Sir, I would counsel you to procure more proper Instruments to work with, for I fear these will not do. I have known Gentlemen well born, wait at Court the moving of the Waters seven long Winters, and yet they fared no better than the lame Man in the Gospel, somebody always step'd before 'em; so that they were forc'd to retreat into the Country with a light Purse, and a heavy Heart, and to rig out their leaky Vessel for a new Voyage; and tho' you are a Master at your Rapier, you must not build too much upon this Advantage, for tho' it may be of Use in the Field, it's of none in the Court: Men do not tilt themselves into Posts in our Age,

nor

nor hew and hack out Fortunes like Knights Errant in Romances. Your *Scowrs* look well in Taverns, and have some Repute at the Play-house, but none in Court; here People are for sleeping in a whole Skin, and for spinning out the Thread of Life to the last Extent of Nature: They'll not hazard a single Pulse, but upon good Caution, and extraordinary Payment; in fine, Sir, they are of Opinion, that a Sword hangs more conveniently by the Side than in the Lungs.

Musick indeed is a pretty Accomplishment, and had you the Touch of old *Timotheus*, I would be bound for your Advancement; for this Artist tied *Alexander's* Passions to his Fingers Ends, he could play the Conqueror into the Transports of *Hercules furens*, and then take him down in a Moment. Now had you such a commanding Stroak, I conceive you might play, or sing your self into his Majesty's Favour; but the Secret is lost, or few improve to this Pitch of Perfection; for tho' we have a List of those who have risen by the Law, I cannot find one, who owes his Title to the Fiddle or the Voice. Sometimes indeed a Man may play his Way to an Heiress's Heart, but these Adventures are rare, and it's hard to chop upon the *Dorion* that will find the Way from the Tympanum to the Soul; for tho' the cut be short, it's intricate, and the Harmony faints in the Passage.

Leand. Pray, Sir, appoint me Tools to work with.

Enseb. Lay in a good Provision of *Humility*, furnish your self with *Patience* for seven Years at least, and forget not a competent Stock of Assurance.

Leand. You are upon a Vein of Banter, or have a Mind to divert me. Why, Sir, I would as soon appear at Court in my Grandfather's Ruff, or Trunk Hose, as in this outlandish Equipage. Indeed Assurance is the proper Growth of the Court Soil, it thrives there to Admiration; but Humility and Patience require another Climate.

Enseb. There is no Banter, no Pleasantry in the Case. I am upon a serious Pin, and counsel you again to provide your self with Humility and Patience; nay, an ordinary Pittance, let me tell you, will not carry you through; you must bid fair for the Humility of *Paul*, and aim at the Patience of *Job*, without these Instruments you will never beat out a Fortune, you will sink in the Enterprize, and after a seven Years Jaunt, find your self in the Place you set out.

Leand.

Leand. A Reason, if you please. My Lord *L.* stands in a high Post, and makes a fluttering Figure, yet I never heard he was a great Pretender to Humility; nay, I am inform'd he is Pride in Life, and Vanity in Person; he keeps no Correspondence with his Friends, and, as if he had taken a Morning's Draught of *Lethe*, remembers the past no more than he foresees the future; to conclude, he is within an Ace of forgetting his Family, and if he steps a Peg higher, he will certainly forget himself.

And then why should Patience be so necessary for me? Has not *K.* bore all before him without it? This little Mustard-Seed is grown up into a Tree, and gives Cover and Protection to Twenty small Insects, that in good Time may return Ingratitude for the Favour. Now this Gentleman is not only void of Patience, but even of all Pretensions to it, a mere Weather-Cock, that looks *East* and *West* in a Moment, and turns Tail to all the Points in the Compass; he is so far from executing a noble Design, that he has not the Patience to lay one, and this fickle Distemper has got so surprising an Ascendant over him, that he will not even take the Pains to think. But if you take Patience for a Vertue, that enables a Man to suffer Contrarieties with Calmness, and Equality of Temper, he is a mere Stranger to it, and as unacquainted as with the great *Mogul*, or *Prestor John*. A Gnat by Chance tickl'd his Cheek, the Man flew out into all the Extravagances of Passion, he fell upon the poor Insect's Family with all the Heat of Rage and Anger; he *Rogued* and *Rascal'd* the innocent Animal, and then Son of a Whor'd it like a *Scavenger*, and tho' I endeavour'd to discourse down the Fogue, and to philosophize the Gentleman into Terms of Moderation, his Choler was too hard for Arguments, till he seized on the Criminal, and condemn'd it for a Mute to the Press. Nor was he more bearing with his own *Species*, I have seen him swagger at a Footman for saying *he was at Home*, and Brow-beat his Porter for saying *he was not*; he acted all always by Contraries, so that some thought his Pleasure was to be displeas'd, and that he never was *in Humour* but when he was *out of it*. Now such a Behaviour looks as if he was conscious of his own Demerits, and that he had nothing but Outside and Clamour, and bad Nature to make him considerable. Yet this Man has outstript his Neighbours, and left 'em
out

out of Sight, he tumbles no more on the low Ropes, but vaults on the high; and tho' he was once below Contempt, he may shortly soar above Envy.

Euseb. One Swallow makes no Summer; and one Instance will not bear an universal Inference. Such Conclusions are not to be trusted, we are in an Age of Discoveries on Land, as well as by Sea, and if a few have steer'd thro' a North-East Passage, *i. e.* a shorter Cut to Preferment, others must double the *Cape of good Hope*, this is the beaten Road, and tho' it be longest, it's the most secure Way to Honour. Once more, therefore, let me advise you to lay in a good Fund of Humility and Patience.

Leand. I cannot yet be convinc'd of the Necessity of this Provision; nay, methinks I may jog fairly on without it.

Euseb. Not convinc'd? Pray attend; must you not fawn on this Favourite, and bow to the other? Must not you fly to his *Levee*, and make as many apish Cringes as a *French* Dancing-Master to this Rising-Sun? Nay, with the old *Persians*, you must commence Idolaters, and incense this glaring Planet with all the Perfumes of Flattery and Affectation. You must place his Courage above *Alexander's*, his Conduct above *Cæsar's*, and his Policy above the greatest Ministers of State. You must espouse his Sentiments, humour his Inclinations, excuse his Vices, magnify his Vertues, and turn all his Follies into Apothegms; for you must wind your self into his Favour, before you can enter into Service, and become his Slave, to pretend to be his Creature. Nay, you must creep to *Valet de Chambres*, fee *Pages*, and bend to *Commis*, who have nothing considerable but an Office, nothing great but Pride and Brutality.

In a certain Court, I had the Fortune to be acquainted with a Duke; he desired my Company to a Minister of State upon Business, but the *Bashaw* was indispos'd, *i. e.* not to be accosted; however, out comes a petty Scrivener with a Pen in his Ear (or to speak in the Court-Dialect) an under Secretary; the Gentleman was so starcht, so formal, and so supercilious, that I mistook him for the Master. His Grace saluted him to the Ground, and in a Moment run through all the Discipline of a Dancing-School, he plied the *Commis* with Volleys of Compliments, out comes first *tres humble, tres obediſſant* treads upon the Heels of the former, and *Valet* leads up the

the Reer. Office, I assure you, overtop'd Grace; and the Pen had the Advantage of the Sword. The Mulhroom stood on Tiptoe, and return'd *Monsieur de Duc* this thort Oracle, *On songera a votre Affaire*. The Promise called for an Acknowledgment, and the noble Peer paid it with Profusion and Interest. He stoop'd so low, that at last I apprehended he was laying down his *Cordon Blue* for a Livery. At our Return, Well, Monsieur (said I) Audiences run high in this Country, and Promises are tax'd at unconseionable Rates. Pretendants are put under excessive Contribution, and you must regard Interest above Honour, why else do you prostitute Quality to so vile a Wretch? For my Part I think you have purchased his Favour, and were I in your Circumstances, I would never descend so low to soar higher. No, Sir, I scorn to trample on a Peasant, and as much to sneak to a Sultan. My Duke lath'd to an extravagant Rate the Pride of that Vermin, and swore he would sit on his Skirts, he alleg'd for his Excuse Custom, and palliated his Submission with the Necessity of his Affairs. This puts me in Mind of what *Cyprian* says to *Donatus*. Behold that Courtier, how he sits in Scarlet? Did you but know how many Submissions unworthy of his Rank it costs him? How many Affronts? How often he has besieged the Gates of Favouries, and run before the Coaches of disdainful Princes; you would rather pity his Person, than envy his Fortune? In fine, *Leander*, you must take it as a *Postulatum*, that honourable Posts are not entail'd on Merit, that many Persons well furnish'd for Employment, go out of the World as obscurely as they came in, merely because they will not make themselves less to become greater, nor descend below the Level of Gentlemen, to obtain a Patent of *Peerage*. You may learn by this, that Courtiers are *Gens servituti nata*, as well as the Romans in *Tiberius's* Time. Tho' they maintain their Dignity with Haughtiness and Empire, they purchase it with Condescension and Submission, and that tho' they are proud to Excess, when their *Babel* is built, they are humble beyond Measure, when they provide Materials to reer it.

It's a superfluous piece of Labour to prove the Necessity of Patience, the Matter is beyond Dispute, and as clear as Experience and Fact can make it. You remember the Answer an old French Courtier return'd a

Youngster,

Youngster, who was very inquisitive to know how he should behave himself at *Versailles*. Receive (said he) daily Injuries with Indifference, and pay Affronts with Thanks : You must practise this Lesson, if you intend to thrive ; for as I have told you, Merit and Reward go not always together : One would think some blind Deity influenced the Court, and that all Things were managed by Hazard or Partiality ; you will see a Man of Parts turn'd over to the *Kitchen*, and a Fop sneak into the *Bedchamber* ; a Man of Brains shall be dubb'd a Fool, and my Lord *Littlewit* call'd to the Counsel ; one kick'd out of Play because he is Loyal, and another taken into Favour because he is a Traitor ; in fine, one shall make his Fortune at his first Appearance, and another shall ruin his by continual Waiting. Now will not such Proceedings put the most masculine Patience to the Trial ? And must not his Humour be very passive or insensible, that is thus pass'd by without Regard ? This may be your Case, Sir, for altho' you plead Nobility, Breeding, and Deserts, you will founder, unless Recommendation, Favour, and Caprice also help you forward. I omit personal Affronts without End, and Incivilities without Number ; these Ragousts lie hard on a Gentleman's Stomach, and nothing can carry 'em off but a tried Patience.

Leand. Seeing Promotion goes so much upon these Vertues, what if I should make a Turn into *Flanders*, and take up my Winter Quarters with the *Capucins* ? I fancy their course Habit and Fare would tame Nature, and drudge all my Passions into Discipline and Obedience.

Enseb. You need not pass the Sea for Abasements, nor expose your Person to be convey'd to *Dunkirk* Prisons, to find Materials for Patience to work upon ; Occasions lodge under your own Roof, and you meet 'em daily at *St. James's* in the Antichamber : The Court reads Lessons of Humility and Patience, as well as the *Convent*, and provides more frequent Opportunities for Practice : Opportunities (I say) able to make Saints, nay Martyrs, did you but take the Pains to suffer like Christians, and not like the Damn'd, with all the Pangs of Blasphemy and Despair ; but by Misapplication you undergo all the Toil of Vertue, without tasting of the Pleasure, you grasp at Shadows, and hold nothing but Wind and Vapour. The Cross of the bad Thief is your Lot in this World,
and

and God send the Brimstone of the rich Man be not your Inheritance in the next.

Leand. I am but a Stranger to the Court, and have not made a full Discovery of the Country; however, I perceive Men paint, as well as Ladies, that the Outside has no Resemblance with the Inside, that when Joy flows on the Face, Grief, Rage, and Despair, often prey on the Heart, and that the Soul hangs on Racks, tho' the Body lies stretch'd on *Down*; when many Pretensions meet in the same Point, Affections vary, and because one carries off the Prize, twenty go away with Disappointment and Mortification; and such Occasions offer themselves so frequently, and they imprint so lively a Sensation, that Nature must sink under the Torment, unless an unusual Indolence, or an extraordinary Patience support it. So that I am of your Opinion, that Vertue is the best Qualification for a Courtier, this alone sweetens the Vicissitudes of bad Fortune, and allays the intoxicating Vapours of Good, it keeps us in an equal Temper, and teaches us to gain by our Losses; and tho' it permits us to be unhappy, it hinders us from being miserable. But if you please, Sir, stand off no longer in Generals. Favour me with some particular Maxims that immediately regard my Conduct.

Enseb. Let your Pretensions be Christian, and your Measures Just; leave not Conscience for a genteel Employment, nor charge thro' Thick and Thin for the sake of Money or Honour. To resign Innocence for an Office, is to set too great a Value upon the one, and to under-rate the other. Start fair, and carry on the Contest with Generosity, and never way-lay a Rival in the Dark, nor trapan him by the unmanly Methods of Treachery, Calumny, or Detraction: Such a Conduct is as base as it's sinful, and favours more of the *Turk* than of the *Christian*; it's a Mark you fear more his Merit than you rely on your own, and that you despair to carry the Post, if you put the Success to the Issue of Worth.

Alexander scorn'd to steal a Victory by Surprize or Stratagem, he disputed it with the Sword at Mid-day, and chose rather to hazard an Empire in the Sight of the Sun, than to subdue twenty in the Dark; in fine, he would have Valur wear the Crown, not Cowardice; and refused to be greater than *Darius*, unless he were also
more

more deserving: This was a noble Emulation, hazardous indeed, but handsome; here was nothing mean, nothing insidious, but all Gallantry and good Nature. Follow this Model, strive to raise your self by those Means Honesty dares own, take not one Step that looks like Undermining or Circumvention, and apply no Instrument that shines not true upon the Touchstone of Honour and Conscience.

II.

Keep your Pretensions within Compass, suffer 'em not to mount too high, if you give Ambition the Rein, 'twill carry you too far, and may let you down in a Precipice: Too much Sail oversets a Ship, the Canvas must be proportioned to the Vessel: Some Peoples Parts are drawn less than others, they are not cast in the same Mould, their Capacities are not large enough to hold a great Preferment, and the very Attempt lays open their Inabilities, and demonstrates their Temerity outshoots their Prudence, and that their Strength bears no Proportion with their Presumption, and when a young Gentleman sets out under such a Disadvantage, it's odds he'll founder before he comes to his Journey's End. The Boldness of the Enterprize will awake the Jealousy of a Hundred Pretendants, and when this Fury takes the Campaign waited on by Power and Numbers, who can expect to go on with Success, or even to retreat with Safety? One rallies your Wit, another your Judgment; this Man falls upon your Courage, that upon your Honesty: Now when so many draw such a disadvantageous Character of a Gentleman, the Draught will raise in a Prince ill-favour'd Impressions, and rather prompt to discard, than to promote him; for Princes have all the specifick Weaknesses of their Subjects, they are made up of the same Matter, and follow the same Byass of Nature; they believe Evil of a Man rather than Good, and when they are well settled in their Opinion, there is no removing 'em. In a Word, who courts Preferment, walks on slippery Ground; it's his Business to fence against Rubs, and not to tempt People to cross his Way, or to trip him up in the Career.

Aim first at a lower Station, and let it suite with your Genius. I would not have a Man that can't count *Twenty*, lay in for a Place in the *Exchequer*, nor an *Ignoramus* at his

his Pen for a Station in the Secretaries Office. Mr. T. in *Yorkshire*, who never look'd over the Limits of the County, nor rode more Southwards than *Pomfret*, should not sue for Credentials to the *French Court*; nor Mr. L. who could never Master *As in presenti*, for a Place in the Bench at *Westminster-Hall*. A Man that puts in for an Office so disproportion'd to his Capacity, is unfit for any, and I would rather condemn him to withdraw Twenty Miles from *London*, than persuade him to shew his Face in Court. Consult your Abilities, and when you are got into a fit Post, exert your Spirits, and try to make the most of your self, apply Care and Diligence, and study more your Master's Interest than your own. If you discharge your Duty with Satisfaction and Applause, you may look higher without Envy, for in such Cases People rather commend the Merit, than repine at the Success, especially if the Advantage be managed with Civility and Moderation; but if you launch out into Conceit and Arrogance, if you fly into Ostentation, and spurn at those you leave behind, all is spoiled; for all the Worth of Sir *Thomas Moor*, or of a *Boetius*, will never protect Pride, nor fence Ill-Nature; but when you make use of your Exaltation to oblige, when you look no bigger in the highest Station than in the lowest, you stand secure, and will have, if not the Hands, at least the good Withes of Hundreds to support you.

III.

A middle Station is the best, because the most secure, it distinguishes enough from the Crowd, it entitles to Respect, and allows Necessaries for Decency and Pleasure. Now methinks nothing is wanting to compleat a Man's Happiness thus furnish'd, but a Sense of his Circumstances, *i. e.* that he shines in his own Orb, tho' it be not the highest; that he is so far considerable, as to secure Repute; that he is easy at Home, and fears no Storm from Abroad: In fine, that he has enough, and cannot possibly enjoy all.

But the Mischief is, we are of a soaring Humour, and in spite of Dissuasive, will climb so high, till our Heads turn, and we leave our Brains on the Pavement. A Soldier is upon the Strain to be General, a Seaman to ride Admiral, a Lawyer and a *Baron* to sit at the Head of

of Justice and Religion, and a Courtier to be a Favourite: *Aut Cesar aut Nullus*, is our Motto, *All or Nothing*. Each Man looks upon his single Self as a Detachment from the main Body of Mankind, and the Proprietor of all that is great and pleasing; we are upon the Spur till we come to the *Land's-End*, i. e. the last Point of Promotion. Now what is all this but Covetousness on the one Hand, and Pride on the other? Two Passions never to be satisfied, and yet always obey'd.

It's certain the Quality of *Privado* is very considerable, and though it does not always command Esteem, it calls for Respect, few Courtiers dare pretend for the Place, yet all wish for the Honour; and we are so kind to our selves, as to think a Prince's Affection as reasonably placed on us, as on our Neighbour, and we fail not to blame his Choice, if it falls not upon our Person.

Yet tho' the Title be in the general Esteem so valuable, I advise you to quit all Pretensions to the Favour; level your Expectation at a lower Mark, unless you intend to stand on Record a sad Instance of the Instability of human Greatness; turn over the Transactions of past Ages, and you will find not one Favourite of a thousand, whose End was not more amazing than his Greatness, the same Princes that set 'em up, took Pleasure in pulling 'em down, and were no less extravagant in their Cruelty, than in their Kindness. *Amon* look'd down from the top of his Glory upon his Fellow-Subjects with Disdain and Contempt, but this bright Sun set in a Cloud of Infamy, and turn'd his Rival's Envy into Compassion. *Tiberius* bore the Title of Emperor, *Sejanus* all the Power, the proud Senate bow'd to his Statues, swore by his Fortune, and his Commands were as Sacred as the twelve Tables: Yet when the Prince's Affections chopt into another Corner, this Colossus fell to the Ground, and buried all his Creatures under the Ruins of his Catastrophe. Our *Gavestons*, *Spencers*, *Wolseys*, &c. teach us by their Disasters that the Favour of Princes is not Proof against Misfortune; that it can arrest a Favourite within the Precinct of the Court, and draw him from the Bed-chamber to the Scaffold. I could single out forty more Instances of a fresher Date, and some Domestick too, but these suffice to Caution against too great Intimacy with Sovereigns, which is seldom purchased without the Sale of Liberty,

Liberty, and never continued without Danger of Body or Soul, and too often of both.

The Reason is clear ; for *First*, As Princes often love without Cause, so they hate without Provocation ; they are led by Caprice, and sway'd by Fancy, and by Consequence are only constant in Change. Fancy is never long lived ; a Word, a Look, a Surmise nips off the most favourable Impression, and turns the most charming Objects into a Monster ; hence it comes, that Men run from dotage to disgust in an Instant, and are as unable to give a tolerable Account of their Love, as of their Averſion, a mere *je ne ſçay quoy* kindles Kindneſs, and a *je ne ſçay quoy* congeals it ; to Day freedom pleaſes, to Morrow you muſt ſtand off in Reſpect and Reſervedneſs. In fine, an *Ephæſion* will have Employment enough to carry an even Hand between the Emperor and *Alexander*, and to diſcharge the Duties of Familiarity without making too bold with Maſteſty, for the ſame Man is both Friend and Prince. Now one muſt have a very Metaphyſical Genius to ſeparate theſe two Relations ſo as to be free with the *Friend*, without coming too near the *Monarch*, and yet too much on the one ſide, or too little on the other ruins all.

Secondly, Not one of ten Thouſand are qualified for ſuch a Poſt ; he muſt have the Prudence of a *Solomon*, the Craft of an *Achitophel*, the Courage of a *Cæſar*, the Moderation of a *Fabritius*, and beſides the Felicity of *Sylla* ; he muſt oblige all Men no leſs when he denies, than when he conſers a Favour, and take Care to make no Enemies on the one Side, whiſt he makes Friends on the other ; for Enmity is more clamorous and active than Friendſhip, and a ſuppos'd Injury ſinks deeper, than a real Benefit. Am not I of the ſame Maſs with *T. L.* cries one ? Why then ſhould he Lord it over me ? Where Natures are the ſame, Diſtinction of Privilege is unjuſt. Why is one Individual of the ſame kind ſtamp'd with Honour, and the other with Infamy ? This Complaint firſt ſtarted in a Corner, is banded from one to another, till it breaks Incloſure, and appears in Publick, and you may be ſure it receives ſome exaſperating Stroaks in the Journey ; and when People are warm'd, Cabals and Contrivances follow, all the Miſcarriages in Church and State are put on the Favourite's Account. The very Tempeſts, Plagues,

and Famines are clap'd at his Door, and like the Primitive Christians he is mark'd out as the publick Nuisance of Mankind. *He sets the Prince at Variance with his People; he obstructs the sitting of Parliaments; abets Popery and Arbitrary Government;* and then his Majesty is desir'd to remove *T. L.* from his Person and Counsel, to strip him of his Titles, and to deliver him up to the Justice of the Rabble. My Gentleman knocks off, and like the Serpent, exposes his Tail to save the Head, *i. e.* drops his Titles, Offices, and Greatness, and gives up his Favouritship will all its Appurtenances to save his Skin; away packs he into the Country, leaving behind a thousand Curses upon the Court. The Anguish of his Misfortunes puts him in the Wheel, and he always works upon his own Disquiet, pitied by some, and scorn'd by others, like Vipers, he lives on his own Poison; and tho' he wants Power to execute Mischief, he has Malice enough to contrive it: So that he is made up of Impotence and Malice, and where those disconsolate Qualities are well blended, all other Ingredients of Misery are superfluous. This is the End of Favourites, and the most favourable they can expect, tho' not the most unfortunate they may fear; for alas! they are not always so happy as to receive Quarter: No, no, they quit the Court to take up in a Dungeon, and act the last Scene of their Lives upon a Scaffold; nay, and it's a Favour too to change the Halter into a Hatchet.

Check therefore Ambition, and give it not too much Line; court rather what is handsome than great, and study more Convenience than Grandeur. Deserve the first Place in your Prince's Esteem, but let others run away with his Affection; though you sparkle less, your Value will be greater; to rise to a moderate Station by mere Merit, is more noble than to possess the highest by Favour and Partiality.

IV.

Great Men need Supporters, and prudent Men will provide them; Substantives are out of Fashion in Court, most walk there on Crutches, and few can even stand on their own Legs. Lay therefore in for Countenance, without Stays the best built Fortune will tumble: However, sell not Favours by *Inch of Candle*; there is no depending on bought Friendship, when a Man has paid for

his Preferment he is not in your Debt, but owes the Obligation to his Attendance, Importunity, or Purse, and though (to get a good Penny-worth) he may swear Fidelity, and offer his Service, be assured he will follow the Impulse of Interest, and leave you in the Lurch upon Danger and Distress.

Beware of a Court Maxim. *Provide for your Enemies, Friends will never flinch.* The Principle is neither conformable to the Rules of Policy, nor Justice; it cuts upon good Nature and Gratitude, and has no Support but Practice. Shall a Man thrive by Roguery? And be the better for Villany? He has noos'd me into a Plot by Forgery and Subornation, and shall I stretch my Credit to swell his Fortune? Perchance he has met his King in the Field, and promised to make him a *glorious Prince* by seizing his Towns, and fettering his Person, and shall I persuade his Majesty to give him a *White Staff* for the Service? In fine, he is dip'd in Treason, and over Head in Mischief, and now must be bought off, and incensed by his Sovereign, as the Devil is by the *Indians*, that he may do no more Harm. Such a Conduct is an Invitation to Disloyalty and Treason, it encourages Vice, and plunges Vertue into Despair. Who will stand up for his Princes just Prerogative at the Expence of his Fortune, when he may draw upon it with Safety and Profit? If Honesty be required with Poverty, and Knavery with Wealth; if Loyalty go out at the Elbows, and Treason glitters in Gold-Lace, I fear Knights of the Post will multiply upon the Nation, and Round-Heads may once more vie Numbers with Cavaliers. I would not Out-rage where I should Reward, nor Reward where I should Punish.

Lean. Spare me a Word, lest I lose the Opportunity of a Question. *Why may I not win an Enemy?*

Euseb. You mean, I suppose, buy a Friend? Because whosoever Deserts his Party for Gain, will certainly return when Interest calls upon him: If the Sense of Duty and Conscience are not able to reclaim a Delinquent will Title work a real Conversion? No, no, Sir, those Cattle fly in the Face of a Benefit, their Organs are ill shap'd, they cannot feel any thing that's generous and noble; they always follow the loudest Cry, and tack about, with the Wind of Interest: So long as you

too powerful to need help, he shall stand by you, but if you begin to Retreat, he will fall upon the Rear, and charge your stragling Forces thro' a thousand Favours. It's a *Postulatum* among those Infidels, that it's worse to sink with a Friend, than to swim with an Enemy, and therefore like Rats before a Storm, they abandon a leaky Vessel, and swim for Safety to the Shoar. To be short, those Men will ply down the Stream, and side with Success in Defiance of Justice; they will never cross upon a prevailing Crime, nor oppose Mischiefs carried on by Numbers; their Business is to stand, though their Friend or Prince falls, and to make a Fortune out of the Ruins of their Neighbours or Country. Keep therefore your Enemies low, they will do no Harm, when they are too weak to attempt it, their Impotence is your best Guard; Power in the Hands of a Mercenary is ill placed. I had rather see an Enemy unable to do me a bad Turn, than in a Condition to do me a good one.

Lean. At least a Rebel or private Enemy may possibly be obliged by Preferment, and it's certain a *Friend will venture a broken Head to rescue his Honesty*, and rather resign his Estate than his Fidelity.

Euseb. Conclusions drawn out of Possibilities are not to be relied on, they plead for both Sides, and by consequence neither Advantage nor Prejudice either. An ill Man may be see'd into your Interest, as well as Lawyers; but then as those Gentlemen upon a fairer Prospect of Gain shift Sides, he may Relapse at the Approach of Temptation, and fall into the old Disease of Ingratitude and Infidelity: Face therefore one Possibility with the other, and perchance you may conclude with me, it's safer trusting a Rogue in the Goal, than on the King's High-way; indeed he may possibly expect a Gentleman to escorte his Person, but I believe it's more probable his Business is to secure a Purse.

Besides, I am persuaded 'tis not so very certain, that a Man who has fought away for his Prince, or his Friend, both Limbs and Estate, will keep up to his former Principles of Loyalty and Generosity, unless he receive a more comfortable Return of Acknowledgment, than a cold God be with you, or I am sorry to see you in so drooping a Condition. For such a Payment bears no Proportion with a lost Leg, or a forfeited Estate. He may very well

well expect you will be at the Expence of an Oaken Supporter at least, and that you will not condemn him to the Basket for his Honesty; and if ill Nature baulks his Expectation, and he cannot make a Penny of his Service, he may think of changing Masters, and may resolve to try if Vice be not better natur'd than Vertue, and if Treason will not Piece up an Estate, Loyalty has Disjointed. For, Sir, give me leave to tell you, Necessity pinches, and often puts Men upon unwarrantable Courses; Indigence works more upon People than Duty, and Generosity seldom bears up against Neglect and Contempt: You must sometimes be at the Expence of a Cordial to keep up the Spirits, and enliven Resolution; for Stoicism is out of Fashion. Men are not so conceited of Vertue, as to think it is its own Recompence, and that it's worth taking the Field for the Service of his Prince, tho' he take up in *Chelsea* Hospital at his Return.

Indeed, tho' a good Man be turn'd off here by his Prince without Regard, he will have Station and Happiness hereafter. But some Provision should be made even in this World, both to reward and refresh suffering Vertue, otherways it may give us the Slip: For present Service, People expect present Payment; and a small Gratification in Hand, wins more than Millions in Reverfion. Endeavour therefore to raise those that deserve Promotion, and whose past Behaviour will answer for their Future. But to grace those with Title and Dignity, who deserve not the Benefit of an Amnesty, is neither safe, generous, nor just.

V.

Let your Actions keep touch with your Promises, and your Heart and Tongue speak the same Language; to proffer a Gentleman Assistance, and not intend it, is base; and to design a Favour that lies out of your reach, is foolish. *O. P.* had Credit at Court, and an honourable Post to support it; some gave him a World of good Nature, others as much Vanity, and indeed the Question lies yet undecided, whether he steer'd by the one or the other: However, his Anti-chamber was the Rendezvous of Pretendants, and his House was term'd the Sanctuary of younger Brothers. *Leave your Business to me* (says he to one) *it shall be done to your Satisfaction.* Your Pre-
tensions

ensions (cries he to a Second) *are most just ; his Majesty has too much regard for Merit to refuse so reasonable a Petition.* My Gentlemen return'd to their Lodgings on Cock-horse, and began to think of a Fund for a glorious Equipage ; some were already *Knights* in Imagination, and others *Barons* or *Viscounts*. All were more happy with the very Expectation, than Fruition could have made 'em : For Fancy paints beyond Life, and over-flourishes Objects ; those Scenes it represents in the Brain, out-shine those of Creation : In fine, Reality scarce ever patterns Imagination, and worldly Greatness charms more upon Report than Sight, *minuit presentia famam.*

But after all, their Expectation ended in Disappointment, and their Hope sunk into Despair ; for after they had run through a long Course of Submission and Attendance, they were dismiss'd with a *Gentlemen, I am sorry my Labour has been unsuccessful, unlook'd for Accidents have cross'd my Designs, and your Fortunes.* Those poor Pretendants were forc'd to retire, and curs'd their Patron's Impotence or Imposture ; they lash'd him severely in the Coffee-House, and convinc'd the World he wanted either Sincerity, Credit, or Prudence. A Man should keep his Promises within the Compass of his Power, and rather promise too little than too much. There is Goodness, Greatness, and Pleasure in forwarding a Gentleman on his Way to Preferment ; but it's base to feed him with visionary Hopes, and then to turn him off with a Complement. He might have plac'd his Addresses more successfully, and manag'd both Time and Money more to Advantage ; but being thus disappointed, he remains without Friends, without Money, without Patience ; he has wait'd away the very Materials of his design'd Fabrick, and has nothing to trust to but a Musket. Believe me, Sir, it's mortifying to fall short of that which a Man affects with Eagerness ; the Misfortune puts his Fancy into a Fever, it preys upon his Blood, boils up his Spirits, and flings him into Impatience ; it baulks his Hopes, crows his Courage, and makes the remaining Satisfaction of Life a Burthen. I am apt to believe the Gentleman meant well ; but certainly he did ill in tantalizing so long his Clients : For the same Instant their Hopes ebb'd, their Anger began to flow, and not one but thought himself to have just Provocation given him

to impair his Credit, and to make him the Subject of their Choler and Scorn: And indeed Men generally receive as little Kindness as they do, and find as few Friends as they deserve.

If you have Power, employ it to the Benefit of Merit and Quality; but be not too magnificent in your Promises, nor over Confident of Success; pretend not to ensure a Preferment, nor talk of Certainty till the thing be done. I would rather give a Gentleman too little Hope than too much, and dispose him to fear the worst, than to expect the best of the Enterprize. For thus he will receive a Baulk with less Surprize, and if he succeeds an Expectation, will enhance the Value of the Favour. Tire not his Patience with tedious put-offs, nor torture him between Hope and Fear; put him out of Pain so soon as you can, and let him know what he has to Trust to; when Fortune is unkind, it's a Satisfaction to know how far she can affront us, and a Man is in some respect Happy, who sees the last Extent of his Misery.

VI.

Some People over-rate their Merit to such a monstrous Height, that they press forward upon every Appearance of Profit, and fancy they are rarely equip'd for every Place of Advantage of Honour that falls in the Court; and upon this Persuasion they beg hard for the Employment. Nothing is able to discourage them from the Pursuit, neither the Greatness of the Competitors, nor the Number of their Rivals. Are they baulk'd, the next Day they return to the Charge; they rally after the Defeat, and grow imperious and menacing upon a Denial; they will hector and storm their Prince out of the Privilege of placing his Favours where he thinks fit, and plague him into a Compliance: But if he yields not to their Importunity, they leave the Court in a Pet, and strike in with a Faction.

First he sets up for a mighty Patriot, and pretends a great Concern for his Country, then he descants upon the Advantages of Liberty, and runs thro' all the Branches of Property; in his Way he has a sting at the Prerogative, and sets the Subject above the Sovereign. These Discoveries work upon the Rabble, who constitute him Guardian of their Privileges, they give themselves up to his

his Conduct, and for a Pledge of their blind Obedience present him with their Eyes and Understanding ; he is the only Patriot in the Nation, he alone *stands in the Gap*, and opposes Arbitrary Designs and Prerogative Innovations ; the *Atlas* that sustains Liberty, and defends Property against Court-Encroachments. In fine, he is Baptized the Protestant Peer, as if the House of Lords were compos'd of Papists or Infidels, and all the Protestant Gentry of the Realm were ship'd away for *Barbadoes* or *New-England*.

Now has this Man more Zeal for his Country, or more Religion than his Neighbour ? Not at all ; his Concern is Interest, and his Religion Mask and Artifice ; his Vanity at Court exceeded his Force, and his Merit or Fortune kept not Pace with his Ambition ; the Wind blew in his Teeth, and now he tacks about, and makes for a Republick. Now these popular Men, these Men of Applause have two Thirds of a Traitor ; and I take it for a general Rule, that he is no good Subject who runs away with the Heart of the Vulgar, their Intellectuals are too weak, or their Passions too strong to distinguish Truth.

But in Sincerity, tho' this Practice be ordinary, has it any thing of Reason or Christianity ? A private Gentleman shall place his Favours as he thinks best, and a King shall be barr'd with Freedom ? Shall Privilege quite overshadow Prerogative ? And the Servant be more Absolute than his Master ? Shall Authority be a *Minor*, and Subjection be of Age ? It is hard, methinks, that a King can't choose Servants as well as his Subjects, and that he shall be less because he is greater.

Besides, the Apostle commands us to obey our Superiors as God's Vice-gerents, not only when they stroak, but when they strike us, not only for Interest, but for Conscience sake. So that our Appealers to the People are not only bad Subjects, but worse Christians : They transgress the Laws of the Gospel, together with those of the Land, and although they keep off from human Justice, they will scarcely withdraw from Divine.

Step not into those Irregularities, tho' they are receiv'd with the Applause of the Crowd, and huzza'd Home with all the Pomp of a Roman Oration, they are unjustifiable

justifiable before God, and sober Men. Receive a Favour with Thanks, and bear a Repulse with Patience. Tho' a Prince be unkind, you must not be undutiful; his Failures are no cover for yours. An abuse of Power, never justifies Disobedience.

VII.

Men aim at Happiness in all their Pursuits, but generally they mistake the Means. Such a Place in Court (cries one) such a Post in the Army (says another) fits my Temper to a Hair, put me into *That*, and I shall be more happy than a Monarch; I will for the Future check my *Desires*, and forswear *Wishing*. This puts me in Mind of the famous Dialogue between King *Pyrrhus* and Favourite *Cyneas*. *May I be so bold, Sir, (said the Philosopher) as to ask, what you pretend to in all your Enterprizes? When will you End? Or do you know what you would be at? I am now (replied the King) for the Conquest of Italy, then to Sicily there is a short cut, and Africa lies in my way Home: When I have brought these Designs to a happy Conclusion, we'll live merrily. But why (answer'd Cyneas) will you Purchase at so vast an Expence of Money and Men a merry Life, which you may buy at a cheaper Rate? Stop your Desires, use what you possess, and the Business is done.*

A merry Life is the End of our Labour, as well as of this Pagan King, and the Reason why so few Courtiers enjoy what they all so passionately pant after, is, because they rather follow his Example, than the Philosophers Counsel. Those who wish for what they have not, forfeit the Enjoyment of what they have; when they desire eagerly, they hope too fast, and are hair'd by Fear: Now a Man may as soon be easy on the Wheel, as happy between these two Passions. Put a just Term to your Wishes, and when you have touch'd it, make a Stand. It's both Fickle and Servile to overlook the Fortune before you, and long for that which is not in your Power. To say you will push for such a Station, is to say you will be a Slave, that you will lay your Content at the Mercy of Hazard, and by Consequence be Miserable. If you give way to Nature, you will spend all your Time in Pretensions, and leave not a Moment for Enjoyment. Happiness only begins when Wishes end; and he that hankers after *more*, enjoys *nothing*.

Besides,

Besides, Sir, it's ten to one that if our Desires tower too high, we shall use foul Means, if fair will not raise us: For when Passion becomes clamorous and importune; the Whispers of Reason are either not heard, or not regarded. Who is bent upon a thing, will have it without boggling at the Notions of *Right* or *Wrong*. *Haman* would bring *Mardocheus* upon his Knees, and because he would not creep, he must hang; Revenge could find no Crime, but Calumny soon forg'd one. Now to rise by Crimes, is to pay too dear for the Elevation, ten Thousand Pounds is the fixt Price of a Title. Why will you purchase one at the Price of Heaven? In fine, Sir, all the Glory, all the Worth of the Universe will not hold out to the length of Pride and Covetousness, and seeing they are too little to satiate our Desires, they should not (methinks) be big enough to provoke 'em.

I postpone Grandeur to Conscience, and Time to Eternity; Goodness is your Business, not Greatness; you were made for Heaven, not for the Court, let that be the End of all your Actions, and the Gospel the Rule; Profit must not regulate your Conduct, but Justice: Perchance you may not thrive so well in this World, but you will fare better for it in the other; *There*, not Title, but Vertue makes the Distinction. A Thief with true Repentance, will go from the Gallows into *Abraham's* Bosom, and a vicious Prince into Hell. In short, let your Conversation be easy, your Temper sweet, and your Piety unaffected. I will not overcharge you (continu'd *Eusebius*) with Precepts; Time, Prudence, and Reflexion will supply the rest.

Lean. I return a thousand Thanks for your Charity, and own my self indebted to Providence for the Favour of this Conference. The Scales of Prejudice and Ignorance are fallen from my Eyes, and Things appear in a clearer Light. I am convinc'd that all sublunary Objects are thin, superficial, and empty, and that nothing deserves my Heart, but he that made it. Had our Yesterday's Club been so fortunate, as to have enjoy'd the Benefit of this Entertainment, I fancy your Instruction might have awaken'd their Consciences, and dash'd their brutish Pleasure with Gall and Vinegar. But alas! poor Creatures, they walk in the Dark, and place their Affections at Random; they never consult Reason, but hate

hate by Caprice, and love by Hazard. A dazzling Surface runs away with the Understanding, and commits a Rape upon the Will, and they will not understand, that an eternal Punishment treads upon the Heels of a transitory Pleasure.

Leander spoke with such an Emphasis, that his Concern sparkled in his Face. *Eusebius* embrac'd him with the Tenderness of a Father, and dismiss him with this Farewel; *Dear Sir*, suffer me to end with our Blessed Saviour, *You are Heal'd, now Sin no more*, lest God take you away in flagrante, and leave not a Moment between the Offence and the Punishment.



The End of the SUPPLEMENT.

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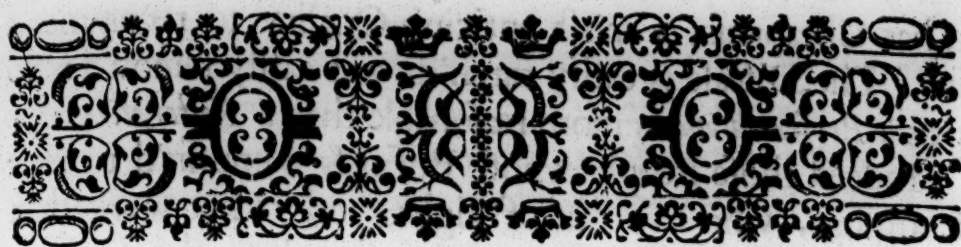
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INSTRUCTION OF THE

YOUTH

OF THE

CHURCH



THE
PUBLISHER'S
Epistle Dedicatory
TO THE
GENTRY.

GENTLEMEN,



Make bold to sue for a Third Audience, which I presume you'll not refuse me. I have no Design either upon your Kitchen, or your Purse; and will neither tempt your Charity, or importune your Liberality. I wait upon you to *Give*, not to *Ask*; and expect

no Reward for my *Present*, but a civil Reception.

Atheism, that grand Plague of the Living, and Torment of the Dead, rages in our Island: Now being solicitous for your Safety, and apprehensive of your Danger, I humbly offer this *Conference* as an Amulet against the Contagion;

Contagion ; tho' it prove not an infallible Remedy against the Evil, I am sure it can do you no Harm : And then it has Cheapness, a most enticing Quality to recommend it. The Disease is easily catch'd, not easily remov'd : So that a *Preservative* is more reasonable than a *Restorative*.

Indeed those People whose Business is confin'd to their Lodgings, who live out of Sight, and rather work than sport themselves down, are almost below the Danger. But you move in a more elevated Sphere, you are design'd for Commerce and Conversation ; your Occasions draw you from Retirement, and your Diversions call you into Company.

Now when Infection becomes Epidemical, Crowds grow more dangerous than Solitude ; and it may be presum'd, that among a Multitude some carry the Tokens, and perhaps the Plague-Sores upon them. It's therefore extreamly hard for *Gentlemen*, who are eternally infested with Squadrons of Spungers, who are haunted by Parasites, that must fawn to live ; and generally discourse more feelingly on the Excellency of a Ragoust, than of God or Religion. I say it's hard in such a Confluence, to escape the Breath of an Atheist, who by the Assistance of a voluble Tongue, and a good Forehead, is able to scatter the Distemper ; and if it once fastens on the Heart, it immediately posts to the Head ; and when these noble Parts have imbib'd the Contagion, it's odds, the Disease either carries you off, or at least waits on you to the Grave.

Besides, Curiosity and Pleasure invite you to the *Play-house*, from whence you adjourn to the Tavern. Now both these Places are Infectious. *There*, Atheism is brooded, hatch'd *Here*. The Tenets are learnt in the Boxes, and practis'd at the next Rendezvous : When Vertue is lash'd on the Stage before you, and Vice recommended : When you see Villanies carry off Applause, and Morality Confusion. When you hear Religion revil'd, and the very Author of it blasphem'd by some, and ridicul'd by others : In Time neither will stand very fair in your Esteem : You will be shrewdly tempted to think those

Things cannot be very serious, nor holy, when Men publicly make Use of them for Subjects of Merriment and Profanation.

But then when you strike off from the Pit to the Eating-House, surrounded with a Tribe of Hangers on, as slenderly provided of Religion as Money, what lewd Comments do these Rakes make on the Text? How do they snarl at Providence, and glance upon the Divinity with an hundred *Innuendo's*, which must be stamp'd with Wit (forsooth) because they are profane? Now these Blasphemies at a full Table, and over fuller Cups; when the Spirits are flush'd and warm'd, *i. e.* when Reason is fetter'd and Sensuality let loose, first meet with Applause, and then with Approbation; for certainly Men are never more dispos'd to deny God, than whilst they offend him; nor to take leave on Religion, than when they have lost their Wits.

Again, tho' we live in a degenerate Age, Religion has not lost all Reputation. A Man may go to Church without being gaz'd upon for a Monster, whilst Atheism seems at least to live under the disesteem of the Publick. Now to strengthen their Party, Atheists have Gentlemen in their Eye: They hope for Safety under your Protection, and Credit too under the Wings of your Authority: Hence they employ a hundred little Artifices to juggle you out of your Faith, and to hare you into Religion, and indeed you have a mighty Influence over the Vulgar; they model their Judgment by yours; your Aversion is the Standard of theirs, and what you approve they dare not condemn. From you they take Fashions, Breeding, and even Religion. So that I wonder not Atheists aim at you: The Conquest of one *Noble Man* may be term'd *Legion*; for his Surrender (like that of *Metropolis*) draw in the whole Province.

Moreover, God has favour'd you with *Esau's* Blessing; the Fat of the Land is part of your Inheritance, and by consequence, Honours, Pleasures, and Esteem; the common Sequels of Abundance. You run smoothly before the Wind, and sail on with a prosperous Gale. Your

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Halcyon

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Halcyon

Halcyon Days run through the whole Year; Earth, Winds, and Men, drudge for your Satisfaction and Interest. You confute *Job's Aphorism*, *Man's born to labour*, and demonstrate by Practice, that Sport is the proper Employment of *Gentlemen*.

Now Prosperity is heady, it intoxicates, tho' it delights; and not only dashes out the Memory of Things past, (like the River *Lethe*) but (what is more stupendious) of those that are to come. Men are so taken up with the Charms of the *Present*, that they have little Time, and a less Inclination to cast away a Thought on the Contemplation of the *Future*; they love not to withdraw their Eyes from the pleasing Objects of this Life, to fix them on the skaring Prospect of the other: And without Doubt, Gentlemen, who have Pleasures before them, would be as little dispos'd to enjoy them, as *Dionysius* the Tyrant, did they reflect what Torments stand behind them.

When therefore Things glide on successfully *Here*, it's very natural to lay aside all Concern of the *Future*: And if we judge the *bad Things* of another World, thwart the Enjoyment of the *good Things* of this; we shall first wish there were no such Place, and then from wishing a Thing were not, to believe it is not, is but a very short Traject, for the Will and the Judgment seldom disagree, and if once you lop off the last Article of the Creed *Vitam aeternam*, you must throw out the first, *Credo in Deum*.

Tho' Gentlemen lie open to these Temptations, I do not say they are always overcome; some bear up with Courage against the Assault, and force these lewd Suggestions to retire. I know Persons of Quality, whose Vertues are more noble, than their Blood. Providence seems to have made them *Great*, that they might appear more superlatively *Good*. Like the Sun, they scatter their benign Influence on all below them, and those they cannot warm with their Munificence, they enlighten with their Example. But however the Event of War is doubtful, and the Danger certain: Where Temptation reigns, there's no Place for Security; and therefore by the Laws of Prudence you are bound to take the best Precautions:

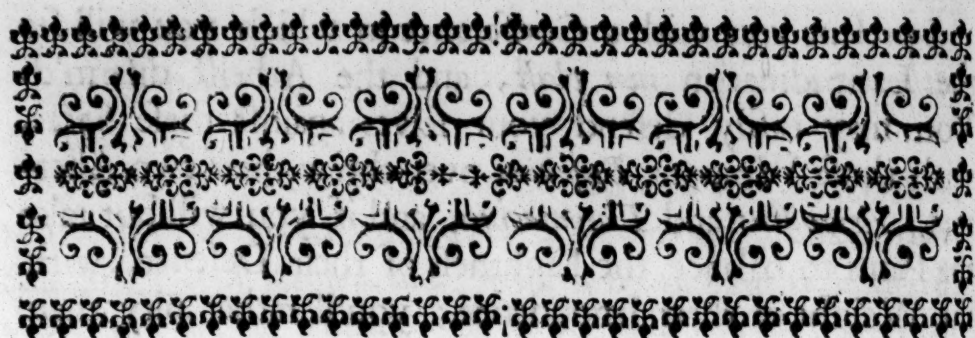
cautions : You cannot be too sure when Eternity lies at Stake.

I present you with a Conference in which you will see the Latitudinarian *non plust*, and the Atheist disarm'd. You may easily defend your selves against these Sects, with those Weapons *Eusebius* over-threw their two Abettors, *Ariovistus* and *Theomachus*; and if you will but take the Pains to balance the Lightness of their Defence, with the Weight of their Impudence ; you'll rather pity their Silliness, than apprehend their Reasons.



Q 2

PRE-



P R E F A C E

T O T H E

R E A D E R.

DEAR READER,



Offer to your Perusal, the Second Part of the Gentleman Instructed. It's a Treatise against Atheism. I hope it may be profitable ; I am sure it is seasonable. It's Time to prepare for a Defence, when the Enemy has gain'd the Walls. When the Plague rages, and Death sits at every Door, it's Time to think of an Amulet. In a publick Danger, Nature Commissions every Subject to fight for his Prince and Country, Unusquisq; naturaliter elicit Miles. Duty Arms us, and Allegiance enters our Names in the Muster-Rolls. God lies under the most vile Circumstances of Insult and Outrage. Libertines make bold with

his most sacred Attributes; they burlesque his Mercy, lampoon his Justice, and ridicule his Omnipotence, whilst Atheists attack his very Being, and fly in the Face of his Divinity: And shall a Christian stand an idle Spectator at so bold, so daring an Insolence? For what were Tongues made, but to speak on such provoking Occasions? Silence is Criminal as well as Neutrality, and not to stand up in our Maker's Defence when Atheists rifle his Majesty, and rally upon his Omnipotence, is to band against him.

Some perchance may stand up and tell me, that Treatises of this Nature are not calculated for our Meridian. That they may be useful to the wile Patagons of America, or the stupid Hotentots of the Cape, but that Atheism is so great a Stranger to our Nation, that we are forc'd to fetch a Word from Greece to express it. We are rather oppress'd with the Light of a Deity than want it. We walk in the Sunshine of Knowledge; not the Obscurity of Ignorance. And whilst we tolerate all Religion, it's ridiculous to suppose we have none.

But under Favour (Gentlemen) we need not sail to the Megalanian Streights, nor cut the burning Line to find an Atheist. These Monsters breed nigher Home; they spawn on our Shoar; they thrive in our Climate, and like the Egyptian Locusts over-run the Country: So that they are become an universal Nuisance to the Subject, and a Plague to the Realm. Stupidity and Education may plead for poor American Atheist at God's Tribunal; but cannot for ours. These are hatcht in the Stems, and nurs'd in the Play-house; they take their Birth from Debauchery, and Growth from barefac'd Malice. They pass thro' the whole Alphabet of Crimes, before they touch this Non plus ultra of Impiety.

St. Austin complains, these Vermin plagu'd his Age as it does ours, but yet they lay under Discipline, they walk'd abroad in cognito, and sculk'd under Disguise, ideo dixit in corde suo non est Deus, quia hoc nemo audet dicere, etiam si fuerit ausus cogitare. But now the Scene is shift-

ed; *Atheism* stands no more on *Reservedness*; it scorns to lie under the *Reproach* of *Restraint*, or the *Shame* of *Confinement*; it has laid down the *Vizard*, and appears in *Publick*, not only without *Fear*, but even with *Impudence*. Other *Vices* retire into *Darkness* and *Solitude*, like *Bats* or *Screech-Owls*, they range in the *Night*; but *Atheism* braves it at *Noon-day*; and so is turn'd into a *Mid-day Devil*, *Dæmonium Meridianum*.

It has remov'd it's *Lodgings* from the *Stews* and *Bagnio's*, and other *publick Scenes* of *Lewdness* to the *Court*. It has wheedl'd into its *Party*, not only the *Rakes*, but the *Poets* also, who like *Slaves* at the *Oar*, drudge for the *Cause*: They rhyme down *Piety*, and then laugh *Religion* out of *Countenance* to turn it out of *Doors*. They draw in all the *Succours* imaginable, but *Reason* and *Conscience*: So that one would think they intended a *general Invasion* upon *Religion*; and resolve to force *Morality* into an *Abdication*.

In *King David's* *Reign* an *Atheist* made a poor *Figure*; he was content to wear the *Cap* and *Bauble*; his *Ambition* look'd no higher than the *Post* of *Scharamouch*, *dicit insipiens in Corde suo non est Deus*. And indeed all *Mankind*, together with the *Royal Prophet*, voted him the *Station*: But it seems we have learnt new *Notions* of *Wit* and *Wisdom* since the *Decease* of our *Ancestors*. What went in their *Days* for *Stupidity* and *Folly*; by the *Hocus Pocus* of a new *Creation*, starts up for *Ingenuity* and *Reason* in ours. The most dull *Creature* that dares disown his *Maker*, is dubb'd a *Virtuoso*, and without any other *Trial* of his *Abilities* commences *Docter* in the *Academy* of *Rakes*: For these *Men* having now usurp'd the *Bench*; they sit upon *Wit*, *Breeding*, and *Religion*: Their *Judgment* is the *Standard* of *Sense*, and *Scale* of *Nobility*: So that whoever dares but defy *God* without *Remorse*, without *Shame*, is a *shrewd Man*, a *Person* of *Parts*, and a *Gentleman*, without the *Help* of *Heraldry*, a *Peer* without the *King's Patent*; nay, he is every *Thing*, but a *Man*.

I wonder

I wonder what they drive at, if they design to spread a Varnish on the Face of Vice, to turn Lewdness into Vertue, and Brutality into Diversion: Their Plot is well laid, their Measures are just; and Success must crown their Endeavours: For if God be dash'd out of the Creed, Morality will soon abandon our Actions. Man will stand on the same Ground with Beasts: Reason will vanish into Sense, and so we shall fall below the Level of our own Species. Power will decide Right, Interest will define Honesty, and Revenge pronounce upon Honour, and then like dismantled Towns we shall lie open to all the Inroads of Insolence, and to all the Assaults of Vice. Is not this a fine Method to cut off all the Lines of Communication between Man and Man? To throw all Government off of the Hinges? To drown Order in a Sea of Confusion? To stock the Nation with thieving Arabians, and to let loose upon our Bodies, an Army of Bloody Tartars.

And indeed our Atheists have Reason to crow; their Trick has taken to Admiration. Debauchery spreads so fast, that the Infection is become Epidemical, it's above Expression; God send it be not also past Cure! One would think Circe had slipp'd her magical Portions higher, Transformations are so ordinary; and what raises my Suspicion is, because they all end in the Beast, and most in the Swine.

'Tis hard to assign the genuine Cause of this extravagant and unreasonable Vice. One told me, he was of Opinion, that our Navies had waisted it hither from the Indies, and that these Barbarians had bartered their Infidelity for our English Ware. Certainly our Seamen carry abroad a small Cargo of Religion, and a less of Conscience: Both are a troublesome kind of Lading, and of no Debate: We must not wonder then, if a Crew slenderly provided of both, lose some Grains in the Traject, and more in those Regions where they see none. The African Infidelity may tincture their Hearts, as the African Sun tans their Faces, and then at their Return, they may unlade the Atheism of Guiny with its

Gold. Tho' these Apostate Mariners may fling the Infection among the Mob, they cannot reach those who move in a higher Sphere: But Swains lie too far out of Sight, to influence the Nobility; they are Creatures of too small a Size to set up a Fashion, too despicable to deserve Imitation.

'Tis certain nothing has contributed more to the Improvement of Atheism than the Liberty of the Press; like Pandora's Box, it has poured out all the Plagues of Schism, that for these hundred Years have plagu'd the Nation. They swarm in every Corner, and are become both a Drudge, and Grievance. Like Toad-stools they start up in a Night, and what Wonder? Nature huddles up in a Moment, those Insects that spring from Stench, and feed on Corruption; They are for the most part abortive Embrios, without Shape, without Figure, but not without Poison.

The Press however is now a Branch of our Property, and a Part of our darling Liberty; we think our selves fetter'd, unless we have the Freedom to snarl at the Prerogative, to vomit Blasphemies against God, and to revile Religion and Morality; and then, that our Crimes may be immortal, and infect future Ages, as well as the present, they must appear in Print, to outface Modesty, and stare Vertue, Religion, and Obedience out of Countenance. Certainly these People fancy Ignorance and Wickedness are charming Qualifications; why else do they take such Pains to stand Fools and Debauchees upon Record?

Alas! their Design looks another Way; would they content themselves with the Honour of Fools or Debauchees, we would let them carry off the Price; but they level at Piety, they strike at Religion, and aim, by Reflection, at the Almighty: And that their Train may take, and their Poison work with Efficacy, 'tis gilt over with soft Language, swimming Expressions, chiming Periods, i. e. they blend Poison with Poison to make the Potion stronger. Smut and Baudery are fulsome Objects in their own Dress, they rather
work

work upon the Stomach than the Will, and are fitter for Scavengers than Gentlemen; when a little Art casts a Blanch over their Foulness, and veils their Deformity, they enchant Sense, and stupify Reason; the Monster withdraws, and the Sound affects the Ear, whilst the Object lays hold of the Heart: Indeed some stand upon no Ceremony, they draw the Statues of scandalous Amours not in Busto, but at length, without a Fig-leaf to cover their Nakedness. They appear under all Shapes, and in all Postures, but those of Decency. What Vertue can stand out against such murdering Engines? These Objects make Inroads upon the Fancy, they fire the Blood, and put the Humours in an Uproar; they fit the Reader for any Villany, and what is worse, point out the Occasion; nay, our Authors stand not in Universals, they descend in Particulars. They dissect Brutality, and expose Anatomy to View and Contemplation, which is a shrewd Argument their Writings are only Copies, and that the Actions are the true Originals.

In a Word, the whole Fry of our modern Pamphletiers seems to have conspir'd against Vertue and Godliness, they canonize Vice, and deify Uncleanness; and by this Means they have run down Sobriety, and set up Incontinence; they have brought Libertinism into Credit, and Morality into Contempt; and Things are come to such a Condition, that Conscience lies under all the Dreads of Reproach, and Apprehensions of Infamy.

Now when the Agenda of Religion are laid aside, the Credenda will soon be dismiss'd, as Useless and Cumbersome. A Man that has but the Boldness to charge thro' all the Terrors of the World, in good Time will laugh at them; and then, because God takes not off Sinners in Flagrante, but leave some Years between the Crime and the Punishment, he will be apt enough to conclude he is a mere Bugbear of our own Creation. To be short, the Press has not only effeminated the Mind, but unprincipled the Understanding, and therefore fitted us for all Dissolution. A Man without
 Principle,

Principle, is a Creature without Restraint; he is all Sense, all Appetite, all Beast, and, in fine, all Monster.

Now to put a Stop to this growing Vogue of Atheism, I have publish'd these Conferences, in which the Atheist will see the Weakness of his Principles discover'd, and if he be not converted, I am sure he will be confounded. I desire these Nullifidians to read the Book without Prevention, without Byass; the Subject is both serious and important, and therefore deserves unprejudic'd Reflections,



T H E

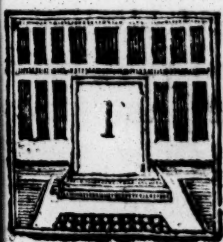


T H E

Gentleman Instructed, &c.

DIALOGUE I.

*How THEOMACHUS became an Atheist, set down as
a Caution for all young Gentlemen.*



HE next Morning *Neander* took Coach, and drove directly to *Eusebins's* Lodgings. He walk'd up Stairs, and found his Friend in his Closet. Good Morrow (said *Neander*) last Night I brought you the Challenge, and now I come to carry you to your Antagonist. I hear he is strangely flush'd up with Hopes of Victory, and has call'd in some Friends to be Spectators of his Triumph.

Euseb. Atheists like young *Narcissus's* dote on their own Abilities; and because they are more proud than we, they very wisely conclude they are more witty. But (*Neander*) those who talk most, do not always talk best. Speaking and Reasoning are not always of the same Side; that lies within the Verge of a Fool, and this is the Privilege of a wise Man. But pray why so early this Morning? Atheists and Libertines are now in their first Sleep; they are perfect *Sybarites*, and never open their Curtains till the Sun has drove over the *Meridian*: So that they live no less extravagantly than they believe; their Actions cross upon Nature, as well as their Faith on Reason. But indeed we must fling in some Grains of Allowance; for whereas other Men sleep to refresh Nature, Atheists sleep to work out a Debauch. And as they drink poor Reason asleep, so they sleep it awake, and this
Operation

Operation requires Time. I have read that the Morning Heats are admirable for Transpiration, they supply the Place of a *Bagnio*, and spare both Expence and Trouble.

Neand. An Atheist cannot cross your Way, but you are presently on the Spur, you make at him with full speed, and seldom leave the Chase till you are both run down: Have you forgot, that *Love your Neighbour as your self*; takes in both Infidels and Atheists too? and that whosoever is of your Species comes within the Pale of the Precept.

Euseb. I love their Persons, but cannot be reconciled to their Principles; I could heartily pity 'em, had they one Grain of Compassion for themselves; but they are a Race of Men, that neither desire Pity, nor deserve it; they walk on the very Brink of the Precipice, (and tho' they know the Danger) shut their Eyes, that they may not see it, as if they plac'd their Happiness in their Ruin. In fine, *Neander*, they shall have my Prayers, but not my Esteem. But *a Propos*: May I not know my Antagonist's Name? I forgot this Query at our last Meeting.

Neand. And really I forgot to acquaint you; He is called *Theomachus*; he is in great Request, and speaks well, though he believes ill.

Euseb. *Theomachus*!

Neand. Why have you any Acquaintance with the Gentleman?

Euseb. I never exchange'd a Word with him in my Life: But a Man must have led the Life of a mere Recluse, not to have heard of *Theomachus*; He has been the Town Discourse these Thirty Years; and never Man has been more prais'd, nor more blam'd than he. I have heard a Thousand Panegyricks of his Youth, and as many Satyrs of his old Age, that leaves no place for Invective, nor this for Excuse: For as I have been credibly inform'd, in his tender Years he practis'd all Vertues, and since he began to decline, has plung'd himself into all Vices: He has not only debauch'd himself almost out of his Estate, but quite out of his Religion; he turn'd off Christianity for Libertinism, and from hence stept into Atheism; so that like *Lucifer*, from an Angel of Light, he is Metamorphos'd into a Spirit of Darkness, and has improv'd the Contempt of his Creator into open Rebellion; nay, he reads Lectures of Atheism to others, and so spreads the Infection, and makes his own Disease incurable; for

if the Allurements of Pleasure are so bewitching as to persuade a Man in spite of Reason to live an Atheist, Honour will push the Illusion farther, and invite him to die one. I am sensible enough that we are more prone to censure our Neighbours Vices, than to take Notice of his Vertues: Invectives flow more easily from us than Panegyrics; and therefore I thought my self oblig'd to suspend my Judgment of *Theomachus*, till I found some better Evidence than popular Reports, which oftentimes owe their Being to Mistake or Envy, and their Growth to a talkative Humour, and indeed at length I fell by chance in the Company of one of his Friends, who gave me full Satisfaction: His Life has something of the Romance, but more of the Tragedy; 'tis fitter to Grieve, than to Divert us, and to melt us into Tears, than into Laughter: Time does not press; I will (if you please) run over the chief Circumstances; tho' the Narrative be not Diverting, I am sure it will be Instructive: You will learn by his sad Fall, that Man can find no sure Footing here, that Vertue lies within the Reach of Temptation, and cannot only be assaulted, but overcome.

Neand. Pray, Sir, favour me with the Relation; Instruction is never unseasonable, and sometimes necessary, especially to young Men, whose Nature bends more willingly to what is Pleasant, than what is Lawful, and who rather spur on their Passions than curb 'em; besides, Ignorance waits on Youth, as well as Presumption. *That* hides the Danger, *This* provokes it; but both betray us. Pray begin.

Enseb. 'Tis a kind of *Postulatum* in Spirituality, that Men end as they begin, and die as they live; and indeed Experience teaches as well as Scripture, that the last Act of our Lives is but a Copy of the first. Vertue planted in the Spring of Youth, thrives to Admiration; it flows in the very Winter of Age, it blooms in the Grave, and breaths forth Perfumes when our Bodies exhale Infection. Now if an early Vertue casts its Roots so low, that the Blasts of impetuous Passions are not able to shake it, Vice certainly will be more lasting; this is the Product of our own Soil, like poisonous Weeds it grows without Planting, and in Process of Time wines and twists it self with our very Nature; it sinks into our Bones, and not only conveys the Infection through all
the

the Humours of the Body, but corrupts the very Faculties of the Soul ; so that like chronical Distempers, it accompanies us to our Coffins, it sleeps with us in the Grave, and burns with us in Hell.

Tho' this Rule be Universal, it admits of some Exceptions ; who court Sin in their Youth, sometimes detest it in their declining Years ; and those who quench the unlawful Heats of Lewdness in the very Summer of their Lives, are consum'd by 'em in the Autumn of their Age ; even then like *Mount Gibel*, they are Snow without, and Fire within ; and this Providence permits, that the Saint may not presume, nor the Sinner despair. *St. Paul* was a Persecutor before he became an Apostle. He made a Martyr in *Jerusalem*, before he suffer'd Martyrdom at *Rome* ; and only propagated Christianity, when first he conspir'd its Ruin. What could be more promising than the Beginning of unfortunate *Judas* ? He receiv'd Power over Devils, as well as over Diseases ; and commanded Nature whilst he obey'd his Master : But when Avarice prey'd upon his Innocence, Treason broke in upon his Loyalty, and Despair put an End to his Life, to begin the everlasting Punishment of his Offences : But we need not run so far back into Antiquity for such Examples ; our Age can leave at least one President to Posterity in the Person of unfortunate *Theomachus*.

This Gentleman seem'd born under so happy a Constellation, that all Things conspir'd to make him a Saint. At the Age of Twelve he had the Prudence of a Man of Twenty, an Air of Gravity ran thro' all his Actions, so that he had nothing of the Child, but Age and Innocence. The Seeds of a pious Education sown in a Soil so grateful, could not chuse but improve almost to a Miracle ; and indeed, so soon as he heard to what End he was Created, together with the dread Mysteries of Christian Religion ; that the Vertues of the Just would be Rewarded with an Eternity of Joys ; and the Sins of the Impious with an Eternity of Torments : He never balanc'd on the Choice, but resolv'd to square his Life by the Rule of the Gospel, and to postpone all the Advantages of Time to those of Eternity.

His Conduct was an Argument, that his Resolution neither flow'd from Childithness, nor Ignorance ; he labour'd to put it in Execution with the same Eagerness he made it,

it, and he told his Tutor one Day, that to defer the Execution of a good Purpose, and to break it, was the same Thing; that a bad Action should never be done, nor a good one ever omitted. He began first to model his Passions, and punish'd 'em like Traytors before they were able to rebel: He taught 'em to obey betimes, that they might never pretend to Sovereignty, and refus'd them all Things to baulk their Importunities; so that when he made his first Appearance in the World, and enter'd upon Conversation, he drew all Men's Eyes and Admiration upon him: He seem'd cast in a quite different Mould than other Men, and wholly exempt from the common Curse of Mankind; he fear'd those Things which others hope for, and ran from those vain Amusements they pursue: He plac'd his Wealth in the Purchase of Virtue, not of Land, and despis'd all Honour, but that which suits with a Christian: He look'd upon his Estate as a Property of the Poor, and therefore return'd them the Overplus as a Debt, rather than as a Benevolence; and when once a *Relation* desir'd him to shape his Charity by the Rule of Discretion; my Neighbour's Want (reply'd *Theomachus*) is the Standard of my Alms, and I had rather drive my Liberality too far, than too short. He never withdrew from those Diversions that recreate the Body, without endangering the Soul; but then he could not be won to countenance a Debauch; and altho' this Nicety often expos'd him to the Scoffs and Raillery of those young Blades, that rated Pleasure above their Duty; yet he either detested their Malice, or pitied their Folly, and valued his Innocence above their Favour. We live (said he one Day) in a strange Age, and as strange a Kingdom; we profess a Reformation in Religion, and a Corruption of Manners: We believe what Christ reveal'd, and blush to Practice what he taught: His Religion is *Alamode*, and his Precepts of Morality out of Fashion. Surely we pretend to justify the Lewdness of our Actions, by the Holiness of our Religion, as if true Faith were a Varrant for Immorality. Cannot a Man be well-bred unless he lives ill? Nor condescending unless he gives up his Title to Heaven? Can nothing oblige a Companion but my Damnation? Nothing intitle me to good Behaviour but Impiety? This is certainly to confound *Ideas*, to settle false Notions, and to banter Things out of their Nature.

You

You may easily imagine such Lectures of Morality were unpalatable to those young Sparks, who fix their Eyes and Thoughts only upon the present. They took the *Alarm*, and immediately cry'd out, *Gentlemen to your Arms*. Young *Theomachus* (says one) is vastly pretending, he sets up for a Preacher without Holy Orders, and enters upon the Ministry without Licence. Nay, (replies another) he joins Insult to Out-rage, first by impeaching our Conduct, and secondly by making Inroads on our Prerogative. 'Tis a Gentleman's Privilege to Sin without Reproof, as well as without Scruple; and whosoever advises us of our Duty, transgresses his own. We shall be cloy'd with Homilies, unless we cool his Zeal, and sweeten his morose Complexion. I am not (says a third) for being always upon the Defensive, we must make a Diversion, and carry the War into his own Dominions. His Vertue I suppose is not impregnable; it may either be master'd by Force, or seiz'd on by Surprise; and if our Enterprize succeed, we shall gain a *Proselyte*, and lose a *Censor*. The Counsel was receiv'd with Applause, and presently they fell to Work; they attack'd his Reason with Wine, and his Chastity with Women. But *Theomachus* vented their Minds before they took Fire, and so cover'd his Adversaries with Confusion, and himself with Glory. Nay, he painted the Foulness of the Attempt in so lively Colours, that he brought over some to a better Life; and even those he could not persuade to repent, he taught to blush: And now he had obtain'd such a Superiority, that all those Hectors who could not love him, were forc'd to esteem him. His very Presence bridled their Passions, and kept them within the Bounds of Decency, and tho' he could not controul their Thoughts, he was absolute Master of their Actions.

Theomachus run on in this holy Course till the Thirtieth Year of his Age, respected by Men, and precious in the Sight of God. Never Man bid fairer for Perseverance than he; he had kept his Passions under such severe Discipline, that they seem'd rather dead than mortify'd; they had obey'd so long, that they lost almost all Desire to command: He lay under the Violence of no ill Habits, no criminal Engagements, in fine, he judg'd himself secure when he was within an Ace of his Ruin.

His

His Sister (affianc'd to a young Gentleman) invited him to her Wedding, she press the Invitation with that Earnestness, *Theomachus* foresaw she would not return with a Denial; he made notwithstanding some Resistance, and carried on his Excuses beyond the Laws of Civility, for he knew that Meetings devoted to Merriment, are often profan'd with Lewdness, or at least that Temptation crowds in with Youth and Gallantry, yet at length Importunity overcame his Constancy, and this Piece of innocent Condescendence first threw him upon Temptation, and then tumbled him into the Precipice of Libertinism and Atheism.

Some of his *Relations*, Men of a gay Temper, were grown out of Conceit with his Moderation and Reservedness, and therefore resolv'd either to bend his Virtue, or to break it. They hire a Woman, Fair as a *Helena*, but Lewd as a *Messaline*, she was one of those who prostitute their Honour for a fine Equipage, and first prey on young Gentlemen's Hearts, and then on their Estates. She was handsomely set out for the Employment, and well vers'd in all the little Arts of Wheelding, nothing could be more engaging than her Conversation, her Humour was pleasant, and yet reserv'd: So that those that did not know her, would have taken her for a *Vestal*; she was well instructed in her Part, and promis'd to act it to the Life, nor did she fail in the Execution.

Theomachus on the Day appointed repair'd to his Sisters Lodgings, where he was receiv'd with open Arms; every one gave him the Welcome, but they screw'd up Civility even to Affectation, who had laid the Train to blow up his Virtue: And now the deceitful *Siren* I spoke of began to enter on the Stage. She continually plac'd her self before him, and took him out to dance a *Minuet*; she found Occasion to entertain him, and sometimes in private. *Theomachus* was first charm'd with her Conversation, then he sought it, and in fine he found an Uneasiness when he was out of her Company; in a Word, his Passion made such Progress in the Space of two Hours, that he was scarce able to Master it: This *Basilisk* had shot the Poison thro' his Eyes to his Heart, and its Operation was so quick, that the pestilential Flame almost consum'd him before he well knew the Cause of so strange an Alteration; he blush'd within himself to sub-

mit at the Age of Thirty to a Passion he had conquer'd at Twenty, and concluded that Magick had a greater Hand in his Overthrow than Nature; but 'tis a Folly to impute to Philtrums and Incantations those Effects which spring from our selves, and rise out of our own Corruption.

He endeavour'd to pen up his Passion within his own Breast, and fear'd it should take Air, but Love is a Flame that cannot be confin'd, it breaks out in spite of Opposition, and works its way through all the Marks of Disimulation. A certain Gloominess sat on his Face, Cheerfulness gave Place to Melancholy, he shew'd an Uneasiness in Company, and a Dissatisfaction in Solitude, all wonder'd at the sudden Alteration, but no Body more than himself. Some call'd the Distemper a Fever, others a Weakness, but all mist in their Conjectures, besides the Viper that shot the Poison, and the unfortunate Gentleman that receiv'd it.

Theomachus pretended Sickness, and so withdrew to his Lodgings, but he trail'd the Dart after him, it stuck in his Heart, and he neither had the Courage to disengage it, nor Resolution enough to support the Torment: He hated the Pain, yet doted on the Cause of it, and even seem'd to taste some Happiness in the very Height of his Misery. But Oh! When he compar'd his past State with the present, the sweet Calms of a virtuous Mind with the boisterous Tempest of a distemper'd one; he thought himself fallen from Heaven into Hell, and confess'd nothing was wanting to compleat his Misery, but the Eternity of his Torments. His Fancy drew out a Landskip of all the dismal Consequences of so unruly a Passion; and Reason told him it was time to prevent them, but he relied too much on his Vertue, and suppos'd it invincible, because hitherto he had not been overcome. He thought his Power over Passion was as absolute, as God over the Sea, and if he bid it stop within the Bounds of Decency and Innocence, it durst not disobey. But alas! Vertue must not without great Precaution be put to the Test. If we trust it too far, it often gives us the Slip, and by a most just Judgment from Heaven, too great a Confidence ends in Ruin.

In fine, *Theomachus* was impatient for a second Interview; he concluded no Harm could follow, because he intended

intended none. That there was no Danger of Sin because his Thoughts were innocent; nay, he was now flown up to such an Height of Extravagance, as to persuade himself, that the Impetuosity of Appetite is sooner tam'd by Liberty than Restraint, and that like some capricious Horses, it runs faster when you draw in the Reins, than when you slacken them. Thus he fetch'd Arguments from the Stable, and play'd the Jockey rather than the Christian.

His Companions made him a Visit, and easily perceiv'd the Cause of his Disease. They prais'd his Passion, applauded his Choice, and very Religiously offer'd their Service in this amorous Adventure, *i. e.* they saw a *Revelation* on the Brink of the Precipice, and would by all Means favour him with a civil Push; for you must know (*Neander*) there is a Race of Men in this City, who entrench upon the Devil's Employment, or rather are his Deputies, they tempt by his Commission, and damn their Friends out of Kindness: They are more successful and more dangerous than their Master, because less frightful, and then they edge the Temptation both by Example and Counsel.

Theomachus's ill Fate drew him to a second Visit, this made way for a Third; yet he stood to his Resolution, and kept within the Limits of Modesty: But in the meantime, the Fever of Love heighten'd, and the malignant Humour past through the Eyes to the Heart, and from thence fum'd up to the Brain, so that now the Disease not only infected the Will, but tainted the Understanding. He began to venture on greater Freedoms than good with Vertue, and in a short time plung'd into Debauchery: But when he retir'd into his Closet, and Solitude gave time for serious Reflexions; Grace open'd his Eyes to see his Fault, and they drop'd Tears to deplore it; he learnt by Experience, that the Pleasure of Sin bears no Proportion with the Torment of it, that the Delight is Momentary, and the Pain may be Eternal. And now he seem'd resolv'd not only to hate his Crime, but even the Cause of it: But those Debauchees who had been the Instruments of his Fall, dash'd all his pious Resolutions, and at length not only depriv'd him of Liberty, but of the very Desire to regain it:

Tears (says one) have no ill Grace on a Child's Cheeks, they become also well enough the weaker Sex, who oftentimes plead their Cause with them when Reasons fail, and so at the same time redress a Grievance, and discharge the Brain: But they argue an unpardonable Weakness in a Man, and raise a shrew'd Suspicion he has either over-liv'd his Judgment, or never had one; you have made a false Step, and who does not trip sometimes? Let your Heart ask Pardon, not your Eyes. Repent (if you please) but why must you despair? But before you pronounce upon your self, examine whether you are guilty? Appeal to Reason, not to Fancy, Prejudice, and Education: Those are always upon the Hurry, and because they raise a Dust, they never see Objects in their Proportion. God is a *Father*, not a *Tyrant*; if he has laid some Precepts upon us, he never intended to overwhelm us. Why did he create Eyes, but to see? Or Ears, but to hear? Will he permit us to behold nothing but Monsters? Or to smell nothing but Stench and Infection? This is to make our Senses a Burthen, rather than a Blessing, it's to turn into a Curse the very Benefit of our Creation.

No, no, *Theomachus*, when God fram'd our Senses capable to receive Pleasure, he created Objects fit to give it, and I am of Opinion, that Pleasures of the Sense have nothing Criminal but Mistake. I thank that great Deity that made me, for the Favour of my Creation; I pay him Obedience every Day, and commit my self to his Protection: Now if at the same time I indulge Nature and give it a Play-day, where is the Harm? Must he be offended, because I am pleas'd? Or cannot he be happy, if I am merry? Indeed I declare against those who fly in the Face of Majesty; who burlesque his Goodness, and lampoon his Justice; those are Attempts against his Person, Overt-Acts of Hostility and Rebellion, they are Crimes of the first Class, and if they are not punished with Fire hereafter, at least they deserve it. Speak honourably of God, pay your Workmen, injure no Man, and you cannot miscarry.

The Gentleman has Reason (says another) he has spoken like a Man of Parts and Merit. I lay once under the same Mistake as you *Theomachus*, and never enjoyed my Freedom till I eas'd my self of the Yoke of Conscience,

and Restraint: Qualms damp'd all my Pleasures, and melancholy Spectres flung Wormwood into all my Diversions; but I have reason'd my self out of these splenetic Vapours; and laugh at these fantastick Monsters; they once tormented me; but (continu'd he) what if there be no God? What if you flath into nothing when you cease to Breathe? And that Fear and Hope sleep in the Grave? Will your Vertue then convey you to Heaven? Or your Sins to Hell? Be first sure there is a future State, before you part with the present. When you can demonstrate there is a God, 'twill be time enough to serve him: Tell me not the Being of a Deity is past Debate, nor that all Nations conspire in this Belief; Matters of this Nature are not to be put to Vote, they must not be judg'd by Plurality of Voice, Reason must decide the Question, not Numbers; Truth is Truth, tho' all the World deny it; and Falsehood is Falsehood, tho' all abet it. Peruse these Books with an unprejudic'd Mind, with that he laid on the Table *Hobbs*, *Spinoza*, and other Pamphlets, the Spawn of our Age, and the Plague of our unhappy Nation.

This new System of Divinity stunn'd him, he knew not whether he should receive it with Laughter or Indignation, for tho' on the one Side, he suppos'd they jested, yet on the other, they play'd on too serious a Subject. Tho' he had forfeited his Innocence, he had not yet took leave of Religion; so that he could not endure to hear the Decalogue traduc'd. Vertue levell'd with Vice, and God himself degraded by a Pack of Atheists, who have no other Reason to quarrel with his Being, but because he curbs their Lusts, and lashes their Conscience with Scorpions.

But the Devil of love that possess this unhappy Gentleman, begun to rise again, he perceiv'd that Indulgence had whetted his Passion, instead of blunting it; and that it was impossible to gratify Sensuality without provoking Conscience. In this Agony between Fear and Desire he first cried out; if these Gentlemen's Tenets are not true, they are at least convenient, they give full Scope to Sense, and reconcile Conscience with Pleasure: Then he wish'd they were true, and after a Pause, perchance they are (said he.) Latter Ages have discover'd a new World, why may they not a new Truth. At least there is no

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Harm in examining their Principles. If they prove satisfactory, I may enjoy my Passion, if not, I am resolv'd to stifle it. Thus did Atheism make its Approaches by Degrees, it work'd at first out of Sight and under a Disguise, and then turn'd poor *Theomachus* out of his Religion and Wits too.

He fell upon the Books with so great Eagerness, that he seem'd rather to devour than read them: And when he fell upon the *Panegyrick* of Human Reason, or an *Invective* against Prejudice and Education: This is fair Dealing (said he!) This is to build on Principles; to stand on a sure Foundation; we cannot go astray under the Conduct of Reason; Interest cannot break in upon its Integrity; it acts without Byass, without Partiality; its Judgment is Infallible, and its Decisions Oracles. Prejudice and Education are the Bane of Truth: They so crowd our Heads with old Species, that they leave no Room for new ones; so that we either act out of Custom or Spite.

But he had done well to consider, that they who invest our Understandings, with the Prerogative of Infallibility, are infallibly *Coxcombs*, that they are great Strangers to Reason, who think it above Error, and that they are certainly mistaken, who suppose it cannot be deceiv'd. 'Tis true indeed, Prejudice and Education oftentimes rather leads us from Truth, than to it. And it is more secure to make the Enquiry alone, than in their Company, but when Men declaim against them without Mean or Measure, 'tis a Sign they are tainted with the Disease, for where there is Heat, there is no Indifference: And so they only condemn one Prejudice with a greater.

However, the Books infected him, they convey'd the Contagion from his Heart, to his Head: So that within a short Time his Disease came to a *Crisis*, which pronosticated nothing but Atheism. He found a strange Charm in the Stile, their flourishing Periods struck him with Admiration. He thought a Vein of Wit and Elegance ran through all their Discourses, so that he was never tired with reading nor praising them: The worst of Things were presented him under a handsome Mask, which made them pass; Poison will not go down, unless it be gilt or made palatable, and for this Reason generally the worst Books are writ the best; barefac'd Impieties rather

more

move us to Indignation than Love, and therefore, those who expose them to the publick View, take Care to set them off in a gaudy Dress, to veil their real Deformity under beautiful Trappings. I know many are of *Theomachus's* Opinion, and make strange Discoveries of Wit in these Authors, where I find nothing but Blasphemy. But some Men are born under a happy Constellation; they have the good Fortune to be dubb'd Wits, merely for Scoffing out of the common Road, and taking the Confidence to deride those sacred Mysteries, the greatest part of Mankind reverences; which certainly is no more an Argument of a Man's Wit than of his Piety: But 'tis a Demonstration, that an *English* Atheist was in the Right when he said, *When Reason is against a Man, then a Man will be against Reason.*

You must not wonder if *Theomachus* once intoxicated with Atheistical Wit, was soon bewitch'd with Atheistical Arguments; every Sophism seem'd conclusive, and Demonstration sparkl'd in every Period. You would have sworn those Gentlemen's Arguments were as evident as Mathematical *Postulatus*; or that they proved their *Thesis* by *Apollonius* or *Euclid*: But after all, they build on Guesses, and ever beg the Question, but never prove it. Sometimes they flirt at the Government of the Universe; then at God's Justice; and sometimes again at his Mercy; and because they cannot reconcile these two Attributes, they suppose they are incompatible; as if Man's Reason (that cannot comprehend a File) were able to grasp an Immensity. However, these Arguments which rather work on Fancy, than convince the Understanding, debauch'd *Theomachus*, and because he could not, or would not resolve them, he thought them unanswerable.

Sometimes he would adjourn from his Closet to the *Coffee-House*, and venture upon a Dispute; and when he was put to a plunge, he laid the Miscarriage rather upon his own Ignorance, than on the Cause he manag'd. So deserv'd was he of his new Masters. In fine, the Employment of *Theomachus* jumps with his Name, and his Morals with his Faith: He is a perfect Atheist, that is, without Religion, and by consequence without Morality: He acts as he believes; and the only Apology for his Vices, is the Corruption of his Principles.

Tho' this unhappy Gentleman abandon'd God, God did not abandon him; he struck him with a Fever, which in some Days brought him to Death's Door, and the Doctor deliver'd him this doleful Message, *Sir, You must Die.* He who before discours'd of Death, as if he had been Immortal, broke into a Fit of Impatience and Distracti-
 on; he scarce knew where he was, much less what to re-
 solve on; he saw he could not live, and yet he would not die. This Strife between Life and Death, cast him into
 strange Convulsions; and the Loss of the present with the
 Fear of the future, set all the Humours of his Body in a
 Ferment. God awak'd his Conscience which flew in his
 Face, and set before his Eyes a whole Inventory of his
 Crimes. He started at the Sight of these ghastly Monsters,
 and fear'd himself more than Death, nay, more than Hell;
 for 'tis more to deserve those Torments, than to suffer 'em.
 Oh, cry'd he, there is a God! Sicknes that has almost
 kill'd my Body, quickens my Understanding! From these
 last Moments of Time, methinks, I take a Survey of
 Eternity; and behold there a Judge who will punish me,
 if I die in Obstinacy, or reward me, if I breath out my
 Soul in Repentance. Oh! I will fly to his Mercy rather
 than abide the Impartiality of his Justice! His Goodness
 exceeds my Malice; he can pardon more than I am able
 to commit, and will receive me into Favour, if I sue for
 it with Humility and Contrition. In short, he sent out
 such fiery Ejaculations, that they seem'd to flow rather
 from the Breast of a *Seraphim*, than of a Man. He de-
 test'd Atheism with all the Causes of it, and wish'd he
 had lost his Eyes, before they look'd upon those scanda-
 lous Books, that corrupted his Will, and poison'd his
 Understanding: He water'd his Bed, in a very literal
 Sense, with his Tears; nor could all the Persuasions of
 his Friends stop the Current. He now had no Regard for
 the Body, that was once his Idol; nay, he wish'd that
 Sorrow would rather put an end to his Life, than Na-
 ture. But *Theamachus* beyond Expectation recover'd,
 and what is amazing, relaps'd into his old Disease:
 Scarce did he enjoy the Favour of a perfect Health, but
 he spurn'd at his Benefactor, and fell into those Abomi-
 nations he so lately detested; as if God varied with our
 Constitutions, and vanish'd into nothing when we are
 well, and revives when we lie on our Death-Bed.

This

This is an Abridgement of *Theomachus's* Life, and I have been more particular in the Narrative, that you may learn by his Misfortune, and draw some Advantage from his Miscarriage: We may date his Ruin from the Rise of his Passion; though debauch'd Company, and lewd Books compleated it. Love sunk the Mind; Conversation and Reading put Fire to the fatal Train, that blew up *Theomachus's* Vertue: And from this tainted Spring flow those unheard of Abominations, that almost drown the Nation. Had not the Printers so much Work, the Preachers would have less; but now the Press declares War against the Pulpit, and the Hawkers scatter the Defiance.

Nean. This is a strange Story; and had I it from another, I should be tempted to doubt, whether Man be capable of so great Inconstancy. Certainly it deserves a Place in History. I may perchance be tempted (with your Leave) to expose it to the Publick.

Euseb. I leave that to your Discretion. Let's not forget our Atheist; it's time to take Coach.



DIALOGUE II.

Whether there are any real Atheists.

They walk'd down Stairs, and when they were in the Coach, pray (said *Neander*) give me your Opinion; are there any such Creatures in the World as real Atheists? They say this Vermin swarms, and like *Egyptian* Frogs, crawl into the very Bed-chambers of Princes.

Euseb. Atheism is a mere Sound, an insignificant Word, a modish Bluster; but in Truth there is no such Monster in Nature, as a downright Atheist: I mean no Body in his Senses can seriously persuade himself *there is no God*. Men may huff and hector in a Rendezvous of Rakes, and Bullies; they may swear they believe no such thing; and in a raving Transport of Debauchery defy it; but then you must take all this for nothing but *Cant* and *Bravade*: The Denial sits on the Tongue alone; 'tis rather a Wish there were no God, than a serious Profession there is none; for whilst they mock this pretended No-thing,

thing, they tremble at the Apprehension of it; they fear its Anger, though they deny its Being: So that those we call Atheists, affect to appear what they are not; and by a strange Frenzy, lay to their own Charge a Crime they are not Guilty of: And indeed the Persuasion that there is a God, is rooted in Nature; we owe it neither to Education nor Study: As our Maker has stamp'd his Image in our Foreheads, so he has also engraven'd the Knowledge of himself in our Souls; and although Debauchery may deface the Characters, it can never destroy them.

Nean. Pray let us drive Home again: I thought we had been on an Expedition against Atheists; but I perceive they are Enemies of our Coining; they are mere Phantoms that flash from Fancy, and only serve for Satyr and Invective. What did that great Champion Dr. Tillotson enter the List against *Chymara's*? Did he Duel with empty Apparitions? And Fence with Shadows?

Enseb. Mistake me not; I told you there were no real Atheists. *Id est*; that no Man can be so far convinc'd there is no God, but still he fears there is one. Let him draw up a whole Legion of Atheistical Arguments in *Batalia*, they cannot secure the Understanding from Frights and Suspicions; for though they may look under the false Lights of Prejudice and Partiality very plausible; yet they cannot convey to the Intellect, Evidence, and Demonstration.

But then there are a World of limping Atheists, who walk between a God, and no God; that is, who says there is no Deity, and act as if there were none; and yet at the same time suspect there is one. This is that Race of Men we call Atheists, who have dismiss their Understanding and Reason with their Will.

Nean. Under Favour, I must trespass upon your Patience, and crave farther Instruction; for as yet I walk in the Dark, and do not apprehend your meaning: Cannot the Being of a Deity be justify'd by Arguments, that flash Conviction?

Enseb. Yes, it can.

Nean. It seems then impossible for the Understanding even to doubt of a Truth, that presents it self in the glittering Equipage of Demonstration; for it is not Master of its Acts, as the Will; it lies under the Command of
Necessity,

Necessity, and is compell'd to acknowledge Truth, if it appears in Person.

Enseb. The Propositions of *Euclid* are all Demonstrations; and yet a bare cast of the Eye on the Lines, or the Titles, do not send Truth in Post to the Brain: We must first see what the Author would be at; then we must put *Antecedents*, and draw *Consequences* before we can discover that Light, which flows from the Schemes to the Head, and gilds the Understanding. Now an Atheist is Sick of a Deity; and therefore will make no Acquaintance with those Arguments that prove one; they come upon too ungrateful a Message to find a kind Reception; and generally when they ask an Audience, the Will denies Admittance; or at least it cuts out so much other Work for the Understanding, that it can find no time to give them a full Hearing: Like a Minister of State, it hovers about the Prince, and obstructs the free Passage to the Presence: But then, when Arguments for no God appear, the Will puts on Foot a hundred little Intrigues to ensnare the Understanding; they are trick'd up for Delusion, and fitted for Deceit.

Nean. I perceive it's a fine Thing to be a Dupee: Why else do Men take such pains to impose on themselves: But can Men cheat themselves into Reputation? Or are there so great Charms in being over-reach'd? I thought it was every Man's Interest there were a God; and therefore (methinks) it were more reasonable to believe, than to wheedle our selves into Infidelity.

Enseb. No doubt, it's the Interest of Reason, but not of Sensuality. A Man who takes Pleasure for the Rule of his Actions, must lie under strange Apprehensions at the very Thoughts of another World. The dreadful Glory of an exasperated Deity; the fiery Prospect of boiling Brimstone, and the horrid Pourtraits of the infernal Executioners, cannot chuse but work upon the most resolute Debauchee: Sin though never so pleasant, with the dismal Consequences of Judgment and Damnation, sit very uneasy on his Conscience, and counterpoise the Sweetness of the most refin'd Sensuality with Gall and Wormwood. Now these Creatures of Pleasure, who cannot resolve on Repentance, have found out a short Way to plaister up a Peace with Conscience: They commission their Lusts to draw upon the Understanding,

and

and compel it to deny, or at least to doubt of those Truths that alarm them : And it cannot be denied, but all inordinate Lusts byass the Intellect, and make it fit to receive those Impressions which favour Passion. When Men live as if there were no God ; 'tis extreamly expedient for them, there were none ; and when once they are come so far, they catch at all those Arguments, which may fortify them in this Persuasion ; and these join'd with the Charms of Interest, abate the Dread of a Divinity. 'Tis true, all these pretty Artifices are never able to secure them against the Furies that rise from another World to haunt them. *Perchance there is a God, perchance there is a Hell*, fright them into their Solitude and Retirement, and sometimes into Taverns too : Yet they have gain'd one Point by doubting, which they look upon as a very considerable Advantage, *viz.* That they may live Rakes, and die Atheists, without being sure there is a God to call them to Account, or a Hell to punish them ; and certainly a Man may be said in some Degree happy, that is not sure he shall once be eternally miserable.

Now you see the Heart has carried on the Contrivance, and from this apostem'd Member flows the Corruption of Atheism. And to cut off all Doubt : Why do the very high-flown Atheists desert on their Death-Beds those Principles they once admir'd ? Why do they turn Renegadoes to Atheism at the last Gasps ? Have they receiv'd new Lights from Doctors and Apothecaries ? No, no, they have left the World behind ; Pleasures are now out of their Reach ; and past Happiness almost out of their Memory. They fancy at least an Eternity before them, Fire under their Feet, and Vengeance over their Heads. These dismal Meditations cool Passion, allay Lust, and change the Heart ; but work no Alteration in the Understanding : So that I may conclude with *David* ; *The Fool said in his Heart there is no God.* Atheism lodges in the Breast, and a Deity in the Head. Men do not believe a God, because they will not ; to gratify Sense, they disoblige Reason ; and hug Infidelity to seer Conscience.

DIALOGUE III.

EUSEBIUS and THEOMACHUS meet, and agree on the Preliminaries.

SCARCE had *Eusebius* ended, when the Coach stop'd at *Theomachus's* Lodgings, who expected him with a young Gentleman we call *Endoxus*. This Blade was a great Pretender to Wit; and to follow the Stream of Custom would make the first Essay of it, in a Critick of Religion: He receiv'd the Rudiments of Latitudinarianism from *Ariovistus*; and was grown a wondrous Proficient in the Science of Impiety: He pass'd the Line of Christianity; and although he had not yet touch'd upon the Point of Atheism, he was arriv'd (as *Ariovistus* us'd to Talk) at the *Cape of Good Hope*; in fine, he yet acknowledg'd a God, admitted all Religion, and would condemn none.

After some mutual Civilities: This is the Gentleman (said *Neander*) I spoke of Yesterday; if Victory favours you, I hope you will give him fair Quarter for my Sake.

Theo. Never fear; 'tis more glorious to use a Victory modestly, than to gain one. I had rather receive a Foil from *Eusebius*, than be subdu'd by Insolence. Rest secure (continued he, with a Smile) if Fortune takes my Side, your Friend shall have Reason to be satisfied with me; I'll immediately Release him, on his *Parole* not to bear Arms against Atheism, till he be better inform'd.

Euseb. I am much oblig'd for your Civility; if I fall under the Weight of your Arguments, I abandon myself wholly to your Generosity: Prisoners of War (like *Minors*) are incapable to Article; they lie at the Mercy of the Conqueror, and must receive Conditions, but can make none. But, Sir, I must beg Pardon for my Rudeness; for altho' *Neander* told me you earnestly desir'd a Conference, yet I am sensible, that it's neither genteel nor handsome to salute a Stranger with a Dispute; nor to make Acquaintance in a Duel: But, Sir, I come here to discourse, not to contend. I seek Truth, which (like Pearls) is only found in a Calm; and unless we all resolve to abandon Error when we perceive it, 'tis better to

to forbear the Engagement: For if we look upon the Conference as a Trial of Wit, and persuade our selves it's more dishonourable to own an Error, than to defend one in spite of Evidence, we shall take a great deal of Pains to discompose our selves; and then the Question will be, who has most Passion, not who has most Reason? For when a Man is pinch'd and will not surrender, when his Reasons are weak and his Obstinacy strong, he calls in Heat and Passion to his Assistance; the only Supports of a sinking Cause; and I take it for granted, that a Man never wants Arguments to relieve a drooping *Thesis*; but he Supplies the Want with Noise and Clamour.

Theom. You speak my Thoughts; Reason forc'd me to deny a God; and when Reason tells me there is one, I will submit to its Dictamens. I never wed an Opinion for better, for worse: What I took upon good Grounds, I lay down upon better: I do not hug a Mistake, nor Pride in an Error, nor ever laid Claim to Infallibility. I cannot well comprehend what those Pretenders to Science would be at, who fasten on the first Notions, and will no more part with them, than a *Spaniard* with his *Basket Hilt* or *Golilia*: They fancy surely that Truth swims on the Surface, and that the best Thoughts lie always uppermost; but then they would do well to consider, they give Children a considerable Advantage over Men; for Knowledge will no more be the consequence of Time and Experience: We shall live no more to learn Wisdom, but to be fix'd in Folly. In a Word, I will no more enslave my Understanding, than my Person; and I value at as high a Rate the Liberty of Thinking, as of Acting. Convince me there is a God, and I'll take my last Farewel of Atheism.

Enseb. Indifference is an excellent Disposition; we seldom pursue Truth without Prejudice, but we take it. I have a Favour or two to beg before we begin, continued *Ensebins*. First, let us speak by Turns: I am no Friend to Noise, and cannot be reconcil'd to those fiery Disputants who sling out Arguments, one upon the Back of the other, yet will not have the Patience to receive one Answer: This is not to confer, but to wrangle; and altho' it may become the Skippers of *Wapping*, or the Oyster Women at *Biltinggate*, yet it suits not well the Breed-

ing

ing of Gentlemen. An Argument propos'd with Noise and Blustering, may break the Head, and dismount the Brain, but it never makes Impression on the Understanding; Truth like a gentle Shower, soaks through the Ears, and moistens the Intellect.

Theom. I was drawing up that Article, and am glad you have forestall'd me; you are of my Temper: I would have a Dispute manag'd with Vigour, but not with Heat; that inspirits Conversation, this confounds it: Notwithstanding, disputing is hot Service, I confess, and generally is perform'd with too much Eagerness to be Successful; nay, I was once acquainted with a most even temper'd Man, who after he had drawn Blood, as I may say, and was flesh'd in Polemicks, never waver'd his good Humour afterwards.

Euseb. I must also desire you, to avoid Mistakes, to call in an *Amanuensis*. When our Answers and Objections are committed to Paper, and sign'd by both Parties, there will be no Fear of Misrepresentation. I have often seen a Conference in Print, nothing like the Original; and he who crow'd in the Pamphlet, cry'd craven in the Chamber. *Theomachus* presently approv'd the Proposition, and sent for an *Amanuensis*: So that now the *Preliminaries* were agreed to, and all Things seem'd ready for the Engagement.

But *Eusebius*, who saw a great Intimacy between *Endoxus* and *Theomachus*, suppos'd they were not much divided in Opinion; and therefore that he might attack them both at the same time, if he lean'd towards *Deism*, desir'd to know his Principles. Sir, (said he, addressing his Discourse to *Endoxus*,) I hope, without Rudeness, I may ask what Religion you profess? We are now met to discourse of that Subject, and perchance yours may come within the Reach of these Arguments I intend to level at Atheism. In *Italy* and *Spain* such Questions are superfluous; and in *France*, when you find a Man no *Papist*, you conclude he is a *Huguenot*. But our Island is more Prolifick, and yields annual Crops of Religion, as well as of Corn. One Grain of Faith sprouts up into a Hundred: And I am told, that you may poll the People more easily than their Tenets: So that Religions rise and fall as well as Men; and therefore, with Submission to my Lord Mayor's better Judgment, I would have the

Mortality

Mortality of Churches put in the weekly Bills, together with that of the Inhabitants.

Endox. Liberty and Property are the Birth-right of every freeborn *English* Subject: And I see not why the same great *Charta* should not enfranchise his Belief, as well as his Goods and Chattels. *England* (Sir) is a nice Nation; I may add, and pious also. We pay Homage and Obedience to the Lord, and will stand for his just Right and Prerogatives; but then we forget not our darling Liberty; we respect him as Children, not as Slaves, and walk in his Ways with Freedom, not in Trammels.

Enseb. You acknowledge then a God.

Endox. I do. I am also persuaded there is a Heaven, and think there may possibly be a Hell; these Articles I subscribe to: But no Man shall stretch my Faith to another Tenet, or command my Obedience to a *Canon* more. This is my *Non plus ultra*; what lies on the other Side of these Points, is an unknown Region to my Faith, though not to my Opinion. I confess I do not understand what God is, though I adore him; yet I know enough to admire his Greatness, and my own nothing. I love sometimes to lose my self in the Labyrinth of his Perfections; to pursue my Reason to an, *Ob Altitudo!* In my Retirement, I pose my Apprehension with the intricate Attributes of his Eternity, Goodness, and Justice; and those very Objections that startle another Man's Faith, confirm mine: To believe what I can prove, is rather Science than Faith. I recreate my self therefore with his Goodness, and confound my Understanding with his Eternity; and put all Suggestions of Infidelity out of Countenance with this old Saying of *Tertullian*, *Certum est, quia impossibile est.*

I read no Casuist but my Reason; and am of Opinion, that God pardons some Sins as easily as we commit them: My Conscience is neither of Steel, nor of Wax; heavy Offences batter it, but a Peccadillo of Infirmary makes no Impression. I thank God, all my Sins have Names, and are rather Friends to Sense, than Enemies to Reason; they neither attack God, nor wound my Neighbour; they only refresh sometimes my drooping Spirits, and gently purge Melancholy. In my solitary Thoughts, I compute and cast up Accounts with my Maker

Maker; and I find such a Confidence in his Mercy, that my youthful Failings are not able to affright me. Nay, (methinks) I am tempted frequently to offend, that I may have the Satisfaction of asking Pardon: And no Meditation carries me so fast to God, as that of his Goodness, which forgives with so much Ease those Transgressions that hurry me from him.

Now if any Man will quibble upon my Symbol of Faith, I can easily forgive him. I cannot be angry with another's Judgment for disagreeing from mine: And tho' I think my self in the right Way, I dare not conclude, my Opponents are in the wrong. Each Religion is but a different Road, that meets at Heaven; and if some will walk on in the straight Path, charg'd with a Lumber of Articles, Precepts, and Ceremonies, let them jog on; their Burthen will not load me: If they love to sweat under their Devotion, I vote them that Satisfaction: If they will not communicate with me, I have no Scruple to converse with them; their ill Nature shall not influence my Charity: I can enter into a Papist Church, and either pray with them, or for them; the place can't Profane my Prayers; wherever the Creator is, he may be ador'd; and therefore at *Constantinople*, I would enter into a *Mosque*, or into a *Pagode* in *Bengale* or *Siam*; for if a Mahometan's or Idolater's Prayer offends God, mine may please him; if theirs pollute the Place, mine may sanctify it; for if they direct their Devotions to a Statue, or Impostor, I offer mine to God; and so rectify the Error of their Worship by well ordering mine.

Enseb. Tho' your Life be strait-lac'd, your Charity is comprehensive. I suppose the Universality of this, must atone for the Singularity of the other. Well, Sir, in a Word (continued he) you profess one Religion, and approve all; and so fall into the Class of Latitudinarians: You are a Leveller, and would bring into the World an Equality of Religions, as well as Goods and Dignities. You lie then under the same Latitude with *Theomachus*, and the Stroke that hits him will wound you. Well, Sir, (addressing himself to *Theomachus*) choose your Weapon; are you for the Offensive or Defensive?

Theom. Let us have our Turns; we will engage on equal Terms. But you are in my House; the Laws of

Breeding and Civility command me to give you the Precedency. I leave it therefore to your Choice.

Enfeb. I see you are resolv'd to overcome me with Civility, before you vanquish me with Reason. But I will not contend with you at this Weapon. I accept your Offer, and will not offend your Principles, before I defend my own.



D I A L O G U E IV.

The Atheist cannot be sure there is no God, nor the Latitudinarian that all Religions are saving.

Enfeb. I Suppose neither of you, are so satisfy'd with your Religions, as never to be haunted with Fears, nor scar'd with Doubts and Apprehensions; for nothing can secure the Understanding and fix the Judgment, but Evidence. Now I cannot persuade my self, that any Atheist, Libertine, or Latitudinarian, dare venture on so bold an Attempt, as to thrust on Mankind those Arguments for Demonstrations, that under a fine Appearance hide nothing but Falsehood and Sophistry. I doubt not indeed, but the Will may byass the Understanding, and force out an Assent; but then this can be no more steady, than mere Philosophical Conclusions, that fly no higher than Opinion: For whilst each Side of a Contradiction bids fair for Truth, we cannot tell on which side it lies, and so float on Uncertainties; and though we judge the *Thesis* true, we fear it may be false. I will therefore for once deal more generously with you, than I am oblig'd in Reason: I will (I say) grant that your Tenets are doubtful; but then, when I do you a Favour, be pleas'd to do me Justice, and confess that 'tis probable there is a God, and that there is one reveal'd Religion. I only ask what you cannot refuse without Injustice, for certainly if we appeal either to the Tribunal of Reason, or Authority, I shall carry my Cause; for the Asserters of a God plead for his Existence with solid Reasons; whereas you merely beg the Question you are to prove, and bring no more but a bare Possibility for the Support of your Hypothesis: And then, you can pretend no right to

Autho-

Authority. The Founders of Atheism and Libertinism were look'd upon as Monsters in the very Places they liv'd, and deserv'd Punishment for their Lewdness, before they suffer'd Banishment for their Impiety.

Epicure and *Theodore* were profligate Wretches; their Morals run even with their Divinity; they exterminated Vertue with Religion, and debauch'd both Practice and Principle; their Scholars have out-done both the Originals, and improv'd both Irreligion and Impiety. Now Men who are a common Nuisance to their Country, a Misfortune to the Age they live in, and an eternal Shame to their Species, and have little Authority with those who have one grain of Kindness for their Nature; they are better qualified for the Bar than the Bench, and more fit to suffer than to witness.

But those who avouch for me, are as admirable for Learning as Piety; they are without Number, and above Reproach: So great Authority back'd with weighty Reason, must be confess'd sufficient to make our Opinion probable, I might say certain; but I wave the Advantage, I may claim both in Equity and Justice, and only ask what you are too reasonable to refuse, *viz.* That it is probable at least there is a God.

Theom. I have read all I could find on this Subject; and am forc'd to confess, our Authors have promis'd more than they are able to perform: Their Demonstrations for *no God*, leave (methinks) some Apprehension there is one; and I find them work more efficaciously upon my Understanding in Company, than in Solitude; and in Taverns, than in my Closet.

Euseb. That is; when Sensuality has started the Game, and Passions are on the Wing; when Appetite pursues criminal Pleasure, and Conscience checks you with the dismal Apparitions of Hell and Judgment; then the Will is too hard for the Understanding; it turns the false end of the Prospective, and magnifies these Arguments that favour Lust, and solicit for Liberty: But then again, when the Hurry is over, and your discerning Faculty lies under no Restraint nor Fallacy; when it contemplates the Proofs for *no God* in their just Proportion, it wavers with Fears; and tho' on the one side it concludes there is *no God*; yet on the other it suspects *there is one*. Now, Sir, I do not ask what your Opinion is, when

Passion runs down the Understanding; when Desire debauches it, and Sense flings Reason off the Hinges; but what it is when your Intellect acts without Bribery, without Illusion, without Partiality.

Theom. Well; that we may rid our Hands of Preliminaries, and enter upon Action, I'll condescend so far, as to grant, that it's doubtful whether there *be a God*, or *no God*; and much good may the Concession do you.

Euseb. *Eudoxus!* Will you enter into the Treaty? It's better to compound *a l' amiable*, than by Force.

Eudox. That is; unless I fairly confess, it's doubtful at least, whether all Religions are Saving; you'll compel me by dint of Argument.

Euseb. Right; and pray put me not to the Labour of proving a Truth that discovers it self, and even glairs upon the Understanding.

Eudox. I know not what Impression this Truth (as you are pleas'd to call it) makes on your Organ, methinks, it affects not mine; and I am persuaded that a Man of moderate Parts may prove *ad Evidentiam*, that all Religions are Saving; but I willingly decline that Task, not to prejudice the Subject; yet I'll venture to propose one Argument, that offers it self to every Man, and may be comprehended by a Child, tho' not evaded by a *Divine*.

Euseb. Such Arguments deserve Respect, and it's pity to bury them in Silence and Oblivion.

Eudox. Raillery a part: What can God require of Man, but Worship, Love, and Obedience?

Euseb. Nothing.

Eudox. Therefore whatever Religion a Man professes; if he Worships God as his Creator; if he loves him as his Father; and obeys him as his Sovereign; does he not discharge himself of those Duties God's Excellence demands, and his Dependency? Does he not comply with all the Branches of Subjection? Does he not stand within the Bounds of Submission? Now; what Religion does not teach its Profelytes to prostrate before God's Majesty? To love his Goodness? To dread his Justice? And to receive his Laws with Reverence? Indeed the manner of Worship is not Uniform; it varies with the Climate, and is adapted to Men's Constitutions. Presbyterianism jumps with a Republican Genius; and for
this

this Reason was most nicely estāblish'd in Scotland. The Laws fence Prelacy in England. Popery bears all before it in France, Spain, and Italy. The *Alcoran* bewitches the Levant. *Amida* and *Xaca*, Japan. The *Laplanders* bow to the red Cloth, and some *Islanders* to a Baboon's Tooth: Yet these different Worthips meet in the same Center, and terminate in one God *blest for ever*. I have not sprung this Divinity; I owe it to a late Reverend Bishop, who maintain'd it with Applause against his Popish Adversaries; the Ancient Pagans neither ador'd Stocks nor Stones, but the *Invisible, living God*, under the Shapes of *Mars, Apollo, and Jupiter Opt. Max.*

If therefore Men of all Persuasions Worship God; why shall they forfeit all Right to his Mercy? Why shall loyal Subjects be confounded with Mutineers? Or suffer for Treason they never dream'd of? If they do not agree in Ceremonies, they do in the Substance: Tho' sometimes their Bodies bend before an Idol; their Hearts fall a Sacrifice to their Creator; and whilst their Intention goes right, their Actions cannot go wrong.

Euseb. Air your Demonstration, *Eudoxus*, it smells of Brimstone, and rather proves the Author will be damn'd, than that all Religions are Saving. Methinks, it has so black, so monstrous an Aspect, that it rather frights, than convinces: A Man must be below the Standard of human Nature; he must have something of savage, and devilish too in his Composition, to bolt out such killing Doctrine in cold Blood. Pardon my Heat, I am not Master of my Resentments in so provoking Occasions; and when can Passion be innocent, but in such an extraordinary Circumstance? But pray, can God reveal a Religion?

Eudox. Doubtless he can.

Euseb. If therefore he Reveals one, and commands all Men to embrace it under pain of Damnation; I suppose the Precept is Obligatory in England, without the Consent of the great Representatives, the Lords and Commons in Parliament.

Eudox. Yes, certainly, God's Power goes higher than the Negative Votes; his Will alone is a Law, without the Concurrence of either House,

Euseb. If therefore he has reveal'd a Religion, and commands all to embrace it, under Pain of Damnation; what will become of your Demonstration?

Eudox. Why faith, like a disabled Soldier, it shall trudge to *Chelsea*, and take up with the *Invalids*; for Arguments that have receiv'd on Duty Scars, deserves Consideration as well as Soldiers. Prove he has reveal'd one, and I am yours.

Euseb. Expect not a general Muster of those Arguments Christian Divines draw into the Field against Infidels; this is a Task above my Force, and requires much Application; nor does our Controversy require it; for my present Business is not to convince you, that Christianity is evidently *True*, or evidently *Credible*; but only, that it's probable, at least, God has reveal'd it, and commands all Nations to embrace it. If I can discharge my self of this Attempt with Success, my Design is at an End.

Well, Sir, there are Christians in the World; and if we walk back into past Ages, we shall find that Jesus Christ was their Founder; this is a Truth that admits of no Debate: It cannot be question'd by those who act like Men, and yield to Evidence. This Jesus was born in a Stable, and past thirty Years in Poverty and Obscurity. Then he began to preach, and confirm'd his Doctrine with Prodigies; he gave Health to the Sick, Light to the Blind, and even Life to the Dead: At last he died by Man's Malice, and reviv'd the third Day by his own Power; he sent twelve Fisher men to subdue the World to the Law of the Gospel; they obey'd his Command; Success waited on their Labour, and crown'd their Endeavours; so that in some Years the Christian Religion, spread its Conquest beyond the Bounds of the *Roman* Empire. Prejudice, Libertinism, and Atheism conspir'd its Ruin. Philosophers oppos'd Arguments, Emperors Torments, and Libertines the omnipotent Attractives of Sensuality. Yet Christianity broke through the Violence of the Oppositions, it multiplied by Disputes, and increas'd by Persecution. Ten Millions of Martyrs lost their Lives in the Quarrel; they demonstrated the Truth of their *Creed*, by the constancy of their invincible Valour; and though they sunk under the Excess of Torments, they overcame; nay, oftentimes by the Force of Miracles they turn'd

turn'd the very Executioners into Confessions, and the Tyrants into Martyrs. In fine, Christian Religion has always appear'd holy, always victorious, always attack'd by the Impious, and always triumphant over Impiety.

Now if we consider the Means Christ made use of to raise this Empire over the Hearts and Consciences of Men, we shall find them diametrically opposite to all the Rules of human Policy; and had not this great Design been first laid, and then carried on by God himself, it must have prov'd an abortive *Embryon*, i. e. an Attempt contriv'd without Prudence, and follow'd by Disappointment.

First, The Articles to be believ'd were extraordinary, and rather seem'd to revolt the Understanding, than to deserve Credit. A God: One in Essence, and Three in Persons, appear'd a Paradox in the Position; and God made Man a Blasphemy to the Jews, and a Folly to the Gentiles. Tho' the Resurrection of the Dead might be good News to the Vertuous, yet it could meet with no kind Reception from the Vicious; it was more capable to enflame their Anger, than to work upon their Belief, and to make them Enemies, than Abettors.

Secondly, The Precepts of Morality cross more on Sense, than the *Credenda* seem to clash with Reason: They bridle the Sallies of corrupt Nature, and not only put a Restraint upon our Actions, but even on our Desires: They regulate every Motion, and bind up every Appetite to its good Behaviour; they inculcate nothing but Mortification, Persecution, and Self-Abnegation in this World; and reserve Pleasures for the Future. They brought into the World a new System of Morality, they condemn'd those Vices which Sensuality had deified, and canoniz'd those Vertues that were persecuted by some, unknown to others, and condemn'd by all. Nature indeed bids us love our Friends, but Christ commands us to stretch our Affections to our Enemies: We must return Favours for Injuries, Kindness for Hatred, and revenge Affronts with Pardon: We must place our Wealth in Poverty, our Glory in Ignominy, and our Ambition in the Conquest of Heaven. Such mortifying Doctrine in all Probability was more likely to scare People from Christianity, than to draw 'em to it; and no doubt (as *Gamaliel* said) it had began and ended at the same

Time; its Rise and its Fall would have had but one Epoque, had not God by the divine Influence of his Grace, conquer'd the rebellious Hearts of Men, whilst the Apostles set upon their Understanding with the Force of Reason and Miracles; that Mahometism should dilate it self to a prodigious Extent, is not strange; it attacks Men on their weak Side, its Maxims fawn on Nature, and flatter Sensuality; it permits Crimes, and promises Impunity; and yet it was announc'd by the Sword, and press'd on Mankind by Fire and Devastation; it went no farther than the Barbarians Conquest: And the *Levant*, with part of the *Indies* were Slaves before they became *Mahometans*: But the Increase of Christianity is owing neither to Armies, nor Battles; it overcame the World by suffering Humility and Persecution; and God made use of poor, ignorant, and weak Men, for the accomplishing this great Design, that his Power might appear the greater.

Now, that what I have told you is true, what Surety do you require? To bid me shew you these Matters of Fact, is childish; to call for a Mathematical Demonstration, is ridiculous; and both impossible: We cannot be assur'd of things past, but by Oral or Written Tradition; both which stand for me. I can bring you Avouchers of all Ages, and of all Countries: Some writ what they saw; and seal'd their Writing with their Blood; others have handed down to Posterity what they receiv'd from their Predecessors: In a Word, a Man that will not believe Facts contain'd in my short Account, by the same Rule must believe nothing; but to wave farther Dispute, and not to enter into the vast Ocean of this Controversy; I will only desire you to grant, that 'tis probable Christian Religion was reveal'd by God.

Endox. Well, I grant your Request, but then we shall be just where we were; for still half your Task will remain undone: For tho' God has reveal'd this Religion, by what Logick will you infer, that he commands all Men to embrace it.

Euseb. I thank you for minding me of my Duty, and I will discharge my self of it in a Moment. First, Christ bids his Apostles promulge his Law to all Nations: Then he says, that those who are baptiz'd and believe, shall be sav'd; but those who will not believe, shall be
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condemned; that he will laugh at those before the Angels, who shall blush to confess his Name on Earth: In fine, his Apostle tells us we can be sav'd in no other Name but that of *Jesus Christ*. These Passages prove my *The- sis*, without the trouble of Inference; they are plain without Gloss or Comment.

Eudox. Right, if you can assure me the places you quote are *Canonical*, *id est*, either deliver'd by Christ, or at his Command, by his Apostles.

Euseb. Why, Sir, you can no more question the Places I cite, than the very Existence of Christ, and of his Apostles; for they stand on the same Bottom; Tradition that establishes the one, confirms the other.

Eudox. Well, well, go on.

Euseb. Thus much therefore I have gain'd; 'tis doubtful, *whether there be a God or no*: 'Tis doubtful, *whether Christian Religion be not the only saving Religion in the World*.

Theo. You have; pray make your Advantage.

Euseb. I will, Sir, and hope to improve my Advantage so far as to demonstrate, that Atheists and Latitudinarians seem to lose their Reason the first Moment they abuse it; and that, tho' they pretend to square their Belief and Conduct by the Rules of the most refin'd Prudence, they fail most wretchedly in the Execution.

Theo. I perceive, *Eudoxus*, we must presently away to *Bedlam*; it will not be amiss to lay in Provisions before hand: But *Eusebius*, you have much Business on your Hands, and before that be dispatch'd, your Head may be in some disorder also: To your Task, if you please.



DIALOGUE V.

It being supposed doubtful, whether there be a God, or whether all Religions are Saving: The Atheists and Latitudinarians expose themselves to extream Hazard.

Euseb. **W**E are agreed at present *Theomachus*, that both these Propositions are uncertain: *There is a God; there is no God;* and you *Eudoxus* are on the same

same Terms with me concerning these two: *Any Religion is Saving. The Christian Religion alone is Saving*: If therefore it be true *there is a God*; 'tis certainly false *there is no God*; but then, if it be true *there is no God*, by the same Rule 'tis false *there is a God*: Again, if it be true *all Religions are Saving*; then 'tis false *the Christian Religion alone is Saving*; but if it be true *the Christian Religion alone is Saving*; then 'tis also false *all Religions are Saving*: For God who can do all things, disowns the Power of placing Truth in both Members of a Contradiction. Now, Gentlemen, I enter upon my Proof.

When two uncertain Opinions lie before me, I am oblig'd by all the Laws of Prudence, to chuse that which cannot prejudice me much, tho' it chance to be false, and will turn to my Advantage if it happen to be true; and on the contrary, 'tis an infallible Symptom of a crazy Judgment, to close with that, which, tho' true promises an inconsiderable Gain, and threatens me with Ruin and Destruction, if false. This may be laid down as a *Postulatum* for Practice, and is no less evident, than any Axiom in Mathematicks is for Theory. By this Compass the wise Statesman steers his Course; by this Card the thriving Merchant sails, and the cunning Gamester models his Play by this infallible Maxim. A wise Prince before he engages in an Expedition, draws up the whole Prospect of Gain, in case Success crowns his Enterprize; and that of Loss, in case it end in Disappointment and Miscarriage; he weighs his Hopes with his Fears; the Hazard of losing, with the Probability of gaining; and will never embark himself in an Enterprize hand over Head: When he knows (though Success follows his Standard) he shall only master an inconsiderable Village, or a contemptible Town; but if it flies over to his Enemies, his whole Kingdom will be the Reward of their Victory, and the Price of his Defeat: On the other side, if a Prince falls upon his Neighbour, at least with equal Forces, and knows (if Fortune favours his Arms) he shall subdue a Kingdom; and though it frowns, he can only lose an abandon'd Bourg, and perchance not even that; in this Case, tho' he be disappointed of Success, he carries off the Title of *Wise and Prudent*; he play'd his Game well, though he lost the Sett; and every Man must be so just to his Merit, as to confess his Venture was prudent, though not successful.

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A Merchant manages with Prudence and Caution his Affairs, when he has brought the whole Mystery of Trading to such a Point, that his Gain may be excessive, and his Loss cannot be considerable: But should a Man of Traffick and Commerce, put twenty thousand Pounds a-board a leaky Vessel, and send it to the *Indies*, through as many Dangers as there are Shelves in the Sea, or Winds in the Compass, with the bare Hopes of gaining Six-pence; would not you, and all the World post him up for a Madman? Would you not think him fitter to lie in *Bedlam*, than to walk in the *Exchange*?

Theom. Yes surely, I would judge him very rich, or superlatively foolish; and would *Duck* and *Drake* away my Money, rather than confide it to his keeping.

Enseb. Should a Man lay me ten to one at *Cross* or *Pile*; I suppose you would call me wise if I took the Bett? But then, If I should turn the Tables, and stake a Million against a Farthing; would you not brand me with Folly and Extravagance? Would you not conclude that either I knew not the true Value of Money, or thought it a Burthen? For, at this rate I should drain a Treasure in a Moment, greater than that of *Potosi*, and turn Bankrupt in spite of good luck it self.

Theom. You can run out in Positions that are undoubtedly true: Pray wheel about to the Application; methinks you shoot at Random.

Enseb. I am for you presently; When two Propositions are uncertain, by the Rules of Prudence you ought to chuse that which cannot prejudice you, tho' it chance to be False; and will infallibly turn to your Advantage, if it prove True. On the contrary, 'tis an extream piece of Folly to regulate your Conduct by that Opinion, which will lead you into Ruin and Destruction, if False; and cannot better your Fortune, or improve your Interest, though True. Now, those Propositions are suppos'd by us uncertain; There is a God; There is no God: All Religions are Saving; only the Christian Religion is Saving. You are therefore both oblig'd in Prudence to embrace those Opinions which will prove highly advantageous to you, if True; and will bring no Disadvantage, if False.

Theom. We subscribe to your Conclusion.

Enseb. But you embrace those Opinions, which, if False, hurry you into eternal Misery; and, if True, are not able to

to advantage your Happiness: What then remains but this Consequence; that you both forsake those glorious Rules of Prudence and Reason so much extoll'd by Atheists and Latitudinarians, and never regarded when they act by their own Principles?

Theo. Ho Sir! You have been poring on Monsieur *Pascal*; at least you are not (I am sure) of the Society; for those good Fathers will not stoop so low as to take up Arguments at second Hand, or to use Weapons beaten on that Gentleman's Anvil.

Euseb. Under Favour; Arguments are not like Cloaths, the worse for using: Nay, methinks, a Proof that has been on frequent Service, is like those veteran Soldiers, who neither start at the Noise of Musquets, nor the Report of Canons. Sir, let us not wake Monsieur *Pascal*, he sleeps quietly in his Grave; and if he has laid Crimes at the Jesuits Door they were not guilty of, he has long since cry'd *Peccavi*; he has answer'd for his Letters at God's Tribunal, and either receives Hell for the Punishment, or Heaven for the Reward of his Labours: Tho' some have question'd his Charity, no Man ever doubted of his Wit; and I am pretty well convinc'd he press'd the Atheist more Home with this Argument, than he pinch'd the Jesuits with his Dialogues. However, let us step softly over him; the Gentlemen of *Port-Royal* are good Friends, but dangerous Enemies; and if you attack one, you draw the whole Fraternity upon you.

Theo. Well, Sir, I deny, tho' this Proposition be False, *there is no God*, I can receive any Disadvantage.

Eudox. And I am of the same Opinion, tho' this happen to be False, *all Religions are Saving*.

Euseb. Let us then for the present suppose this Proposition is False, *there is no God*; therefore this is true, *there is a God*: Now if there be a God, he is Just.

Theo. He is.

Euseb. Therefore he must, and will punish those who transgress his Law, and question his Authority: For he acts no less against the Laws of Justice, who winks at Crimes, than he who martyrs Innocence: This we call Tyranny and Oppression; that criminal Indulgence and Partiality; both clash with Justice; the one exceeds a Mean; the other falls short of it: Now God cannot act with Justice, unless the Punishment bears some Proportion with

with the Offence: Seeing therefore there is an infinite Distance between the Offender and the Person offended; the Punishment must be in some sort Infinite; but it cannot be Infinite in Intention; therefore it must be in Extention or Continuance.

Besides, the Lives of the most refin'd Debauchees; run on in a never-interrupted Series of Prosperity; they neither groan under the Pangs of Sickness; nor the throws of Poverty; they enjoy the Blessing of Health; and wallow in Abundance; their Undertakings, though laid with Folly, come off with Success; and so they carry off Profit and Applause, though their Conduct deserves Disappointment and Contempt; they sail on prosperously with all Winds; and if sometimes they stick upon a Rock, they only perceive the Danger to get off with Pleasure. Now seeing God is Just; and does not drag out these Malefactors to Execution in this World; 'tis clear they will feel the weight of his just Resentment in the other. So that *Theomachus*, if there be a God, you see what expects you hereafter: Justice, Revenge, Torments, and Misery.

But then, if Christian Religion be true; and the only saving Religion in the World; the Scene is shifted from bad to worse; from Horror to Amazement: And you *Endoxus* are in the same Misfortune with your Friend. Though the Light of Nature tells us God will crown his friends in the next World, and chastise his Enemies: Yet the Light of Nature cannot particularize either the Rewards or Punishments. This *Arcanum* we owe to Divine Revelation alone; and we have Grounds sufficient, at least to make it highly probable he has reveal'd it; and if it be true, that he has, the Atheist and Latitudinarian lay Cross and Pile at an excessive Disadvantage; they make an Eternity of Happiness, and another of Misery against a Bauble; for they cannot lose the first, without selling foul on the second; like accursed *Cains*, they will be banish'd from the Face of God, and carry on their Foreheads a perpetual Mark of his Vengeance; and their Reprobation: They will fry in Pitch and Flame, in Brimstone without Pity, without Compassion, and (what is worse) without Term, without Annihilation; and can fancy frame a greater Torment, than always to be barr'd of the Sight of God? And always to desire a Glimpse

Glimpse of that Infinite Beauty, than always to burn and rage with Devils, and always to despair of Release; to these strange Misfortunes do Atheists and Latitudinarians expose themselves, *If there be a God; and if Christian Religion be the only Saving Religion in the World;* and for ought you know both may be True.

Theo. You follow your Adversaries with so much Heat, that you wound your self in the Pursuit; your very Arguments destroy your *Hypothesis*; and whilst you suppose there may be a God, you very learnedly demonstrate there is none.

Enseb. You have a mind to sport, but Jest never improve into Arguments, nor can Raillery grow up into Reason.

Theo. Sir, you mistake, I am not in a jesting Humour; Pray, if there be a God, is he not Merciful?

Enseb. He is.

Theo. And if you suppose a God, and at the same time prove, that he is unjust, unmerciful, nay, tyrannical and savage; do you not pull down with one Hand, what you raise with the other? Does not your Proof fly in the Face of your Position? You say, if there be a God, I shall feel the weight of his exasperated Anger for all Eternity: I shall glow in Pitch, and boil in Brimstone: What is this but to clap the most exorbitant Tyranny on Mercy it self? To blend Cruelty with Meekness? Barbarity with Justice? To sink an infinite Mercy into Cruelty? And to turn God into a *Chimera*?

You may perchance scare poor Children, or silly Women with your *Quivedo's Visions of Hell*; and swell his Fancies into divine Revelation; but Men are not so easily impos'd upon. I know if there be a God, he is merciful; and that it is not Mercy's Office to butcher, but to pardon: Besides, you confess, that God is the Model of all Perfection; that our Vertue is but a dark Beam of his. How then can he command us (*as you say he does*) to revenge Affronts with Favours? To lay down our Lives for our Enemies; when he prosecutes his, with Racks and Flames? Either therefore there is no Hell, or no Mercy in God; and then there will be no God: Take which part of the *Dilemma* you please; I shall be pretty secure against future Contingencies: So that you see, we Atheists and Libertines walk on more even Ground than you imagine.

Enfeb. I might return your own Argument upon you; and shew that you run his Mercy so high, that you quite discard his Justice: But I will wave this Advantage, and single out your Reasons; which rather amaze, than convince. You say God's Goodness hinders him from taking any cognizance of Crimes in the next World: Therefore it is lawful to trample upon his Majesty; to controul his Orders; and to spurn at his Commands: He who so dotes on our Persons, cannot revenge the Offences: Therefore Blasphemy, Murders, Adulteries, and all those Crimes that outrage Nature, and put even Atheists to the Blush, are but indifferent Actions; they have no more harm than what flows from Vision, Prejudice, and Imagination: For were they Crimes, they would deserve Punishment in the next World: Now Mercy ties God's Hands, according to your new System; and absolves the Criminal. Hence it follows, that seeing no Action deserves Punishment; no Actions are Crimes; and by Consequence there is no Law, for every Crime is a Transgression of the Law. This is a comfortable Doctrine for Whores and Rogues; and you deserve a Pension from Goals and Baudy-houses. Such helps as these keep up the Trade, enrich the Hangman, and break down all the Barriers of Shame, to let into the World a Deluge of Lewdness, and Abominations. Thus whilst you plead for God's Mercy, you solicit for Vice, and turn Advocate for Impiety.

I grant God is Good and Merciful; and we need no other Evidence to illustrate this Truth; but that you breath and enjoy the common Blessing of Mankind: Had not God rather follow'd the mild Inclinations of his Mercy, than the more severe Laws of his Justice, Punishment had trod on the Heels of your Crimes; he had tore you from your Debaucheries, *in flagranti*, and left not a Moment between the Sin and your Damnation: But, Sir, he has forgone his Right, and taken more mild Methods; he has bore your Insolence these many Years with Patience, and call'd you to Repentance, when he might have deliver'd you over to Punishment: No, I am told what bold Returns of Ingratitude you have made for this excessive Kindness: You have (more than once) in the very Face of the Sun, to the Scandal not only of Religion, but of Humanity; spit in the Face of this In-

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finite Mercy: You have burlesqued his Goodness, and profanely deny'd he ever saw your Crimes, or hated em; because he did not revenge them on the Spot, and put an end to your Life and Blasphemies the same Moment: Yet after all these flaming Attempts against his Prerogative, and Person; you not only live, but receive continual Favours from his Munificence; he expects only a *Pericavi* to seal your Pardon, and to cancel your Offences; but if you will stand to your abominable Principles, and droll upon his Menaces; if you will push on Obstinacy to the Grave; he will soften your hard Heart in Flames, and teach you by a dismal Experience, that he wants not Mercy, but that you do not deserve to feel the Effects of so amiable an Attribute.

In short, God is good, because he created so vile a Creature as Man, to so high a Fortune; because, when our first Parent *Adam* withdrew himself from Duty, and engag'd his whole Posterity in open Rebellion, he was pleas'd to assume our Nature, to expiate our Sins with his Blood, and to breath into our Souls a new Life of Grace by his Death; because he sets a thousand Wheels on work, to draw back Sinners to Repentance, and generally gives them Time, and always Grace to look into their irregular Conduct, and to detest it: These are undoubted Marks of a most solid Goodness; and by this Square, God commands us to model our Behaviour towards our Enemies, and he has laid before us so compleat a Pattern, that we shall never be able to reach it.

But then God has regard to Justice, even when he seems to abandon himself totally to the Conduct of Mercy; for these Perfections which stand at the Helm of Government are never at Variance; their Advice is Uniform, and both conspire to banish Confusion, and to establish Order; for God's Mercy is nothing else, but a sincere Intention to procure a Creature good, so far only as Order will permit: Therefore, when a Creature has disturb'd this Order, God's Mercy pursues the Criminal, he offers him his Grace, and invites him a thousand Times to re-establish by Repentance, the Order he had broken by his Disobedience: And then, if he will not hearken to these kind Exhortations; Justice forces him to re-settle it by Torments; for God, tho' he be Omnipotent, cannot permit Disorder: He must either destroy it

it in Time, by forgiving Sins, or in Eternity, by punishing them. In fine, Sir, Mercy governs in this World, but its Commission extends not to the other; *there* Justice reigns alone, and either distributes Rewards, or inflicts Punishment. Much good therefore may your *Dilemma* do you. *There is a God, and He is Merciful: There is a God, and He is Just.* If that be a Perfection, so is this, nor are they incompatible: For tho' one Vice may jarr with another, Vertues are of a more peaceable Complexion, they live in Union, and can lodge in the same Breast.

Theom. I don't deny, but that Offences against the Divine Majesty may deserve some Punishment; and I know, that if there be a God, he has Power to chastize, as well as to reward; but an Eternal Punishment is very lasting, and looks more like an Act of Tyranny, than Justice. I could allow well enough of a round Fit of the Gout, or Stone; or let God punish my Crimes on my Cattle with Murrains, Plagues, and Mortality, I am contented: But an Eternal Torment for one Escape of Nature, for one Sally of Passion, can only proceed from Excess of Cruelty.

Enseb. We should live under a most happy Government, were all our Judges of your soft Disposition; what merry Days should we enjoy if Murtherers were only Pillory'd? Sodomites Whipt? And Traytors confin'd to their lodgings? Such severe Laws, would no doubt disarm Vice, discourage Villany, and put all Roguery out of Countenance. But, Sir, tell me, would not such overstrain'd Mercy let loose the whole Kennel of Abominations? Would it not cut off all the Lines of Communication between Man and Man, and turn all into a Heap of Confusion? Would not you judge those more guilty who made such Laws, than those who broke 'em? I am sure you would call out for some Grains of Severity, and apply a more violent Remedy to cure the agonizing Government. Yet you are in an ill Humour, because God does not steer his Conduct by those condescending Methods you condemn; and if he did, you would as certainly arraign his Mercy, as now you impeach his Justice. In a Word, *Theomachus*, as I told you above, there is an infinite Distance between God and Man; therefore the Malice of every Sin is as Divines hold, in
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some sort Infinite ; therefore, it deserves a Punishment, in some sort Infinite. But it can be only Infinite in Duration ; therefore every mortal Sin deserves an eternal Punishment. How then dare you fasten on God Cruelty and Barbarism, when he only Proportions the Pain to the Offence. Sir, take my Advice : 'Tis more secure for you to repent, than to complain ; 'tis Madness to play with the supream Being, Ingratitude to treat ill the best of Friends, Frenzy to provoke the strongest Enemy.

Theom. If I carry God's Mercy too high, you stretch his Justice beyond all Proportion. What Equality can you discover between a momentary Offence, and a never ending Pain ? Between a Malice that has some Bounds, and a Punishment that has none ? Methinks, at least an Age of Torments may expiate a Day of unlawful Pleasure : But to rack and torture a short-liv'd Frailty, Eternally ; is to strain Justice to the very Pitch of Cruelty.

Euseb. No Doubt, Justice always Proportions the Punishment to the Offence ; but then, this Proportion cannot consist in an equal Duration of the Crime, and the Pain. I have known a Perjury that pass'd through a D — —'s Teeth in a Moment, pillory'd a whole Hour : And I have seen the guilty *Patient* run the Gauntlet from *Newgate* to *Tyburn*. Yet tho' the Punishment was of a longer Continuance, than the Oath ; who complain'd of Cruelty, but those very Rascals that deserv'd the Correction ? Does not Justice sometimes take Criminals by the Ears ? And make the Guilty compound for their Transgressions, with the Loss of those innocent Members, which seldom return to their Owners. Felons, Murderers, and Trayors by the Law of Nation suffer Death, that is a Punishment in some kind Eternal : And if the Soul be Mortal (as the Atheists contend) absolutely so, because it forces the Criminals into a State of Nothing, in which they must Eternally remain. The Vote of Mankind runs therefore against your Notion of Equity ; and the Atheist's Idea of Justice is no more defensible, than his Practice. Nay, Sir, if any Crime against a Prince or the Common-wealth can justly deserve Death, one against God as justly deserves Hell eternally.

For as on the one Side the Grandeur, Majesty, and Perfections of God, surpass infinitely those of the greatest and most absolute Monarch that ever breath'd : So on the

the other, our Obligation to obey, respect and love this august Master, rises with his Greatness. Therefore an Offence against God, exceeds that against a Prince, at least *terminative* in the same Proportion, that the Perfections of the one, excel the Baseness of the other. Therefore as there can be no Comparison between the Offences, there must be none between the Punishments. Now let the Punishment of a Crime against God be never so great, if it be not Eternal, there must of Necessity be some Proportion between it and Death, the just Punishment of a Treason against the Person of a temporal Prince: Therefore no Punishment can equal an Offence against God, unless it be Eternal.

Theo. You suppose, when we recreate Nature, we erect a *High Court of Justice*, and commission Judge to arraign him; this is a Theological Speculation. No, no, we are so far from questioning his Authority, or impeaching his Majesty, that we do not even think of him in our Debauchees: We intend not to displease him; but to please our Appetites; to regale our Senses, and enjoy the Creature.

Enseb. This is an excellent Plea for Thieves and Murderers; and (would it hold) the Government might shut up *Newgate*, and pull down the Gallows; for few Highwaymen think of his Majesty, or his Laws, while they Murder and take Purfes on the Road. Let us suppose one of those Gentlemen on the Ladder, haranguing thus to the Spectators. Good People! I am brought to an untimely, and (what is worse) to a most shameful End, against all the Laws of Justice. I was brought to the Bar for affronting his Majesty: The Jury has found me Guilty; and the Judge condemn'd me. Now I protest, I never harbour'd an unbeseeming Thought of his Majesty. I have serv'd my Sovereign at the Expence of my Blood; and was always ready to maintain his just Rights and Prerogatives with my Life and Fortune. I follow'd my Master to *Steenkerck* and *Norwinde*, and lost some flesh, and my Money in his Service: At my Return, I was put to my Shifts, and could meet with no Relief, out on the Highway: Here I providentially fell upon a present Supply, I trust up a Brace of Lawyers, and called a solitary *Parson*; but in all my Expeditions, I never dreamt of his Majesty: How then could I affront or

offend her? What Relation is there between the Princess, and the Subject, that an Injury offer'd one, must rebound on the other? What think you? Would this Loyal Speech reverse the Sentence?

Theom. No: I think Mr. Sheriff would bid Jack-ketch do his Office.

Enseb. I am of your Opinion: But then has not this Knight of the King's Highway an Atheist's Plea? He cries *not Guilty, good People!* Because in the actual Transgression of the King's Laws, he never thought of his Majesty; and you plead for Impunity, because (whilst you outrag'd Nature) you never dreamt of God. Sir, God is absolute Monarch of the Universe: He owes his Title to Sovereignty, neither to Birth, nor Election: His Right is founded in his boundless Perfections. Those Laws of Nature you transgress without Scruple or Remorse, are of his making; and to controul his Orders, is to affront his Person: So that though Sinners do not question his Authority; at least they despise it: Now for a vile Worm to contend with, and dare so great, so awful a Majesty, is to over-shoot Insolence it self.

Theom. Well; God's Justice, together with Devils, Flames, Darknes, and Despair, would discompose me, could I persuade my self, my Soul would revive my Body; but, alas, we enter into the World like Beasts; and make as inglorious an *Exit*: Our Bodies fall into Dust; and our Souls into Nothing: Twenty Years hence I shall be, what I was a Thousand Years ago; a mere *non ens*, incapable either of Pain or Pleasure.

Enseb. This Evasion chills my Blood. What can't you defend your Cause without drawing upon Nature? Nor prove you are no Fool, without confessing your self a Beast? I could easily force you from this Retrenchment, by demonstrating the Immortality of the Soul; but I leave this Enterprize to a more convenient Season. In the mean time, I only desire to know, whether you are sure, the Soul ends with the last Breath: Without Certainty, you are just where you was; expos'd to that miserable State, that respects Atheists, if there be a God. Tell me then, are you sure Mens Souls are Mortal?

Theom. When I compare the Operations of Beasts with those of Men, methinks we stand on the same Level, yet

yet a Voice within; tells me I am of a more noble Extraction; and this soft Whisper pesters my Brain with Doubts, and my Heart with Fears.

Euseb. Perchance therefore your Soul is Immortal: Perchance there is a God, a Hell, and a Heaven: Perchance Christianity is the only saving Religion in the World. Now if these Things were real, (and for ought you know they are) what will become of Atheists and Latitudinarians? How nicely will they have manag'd their Affairs; when they see themselves stript of all Title to Heaven, and find an Eternal Habitation prepared in Hell? You see what Hazard you run; and therefore I must conclude your Conduct is foolish, and mad to Frenzy; unless you can make good to *Evidence*, that if your Opinions prove true, you shall enjoy *some Good*, that counterpoises the eternal Loss of Heaven; nay, and the exorbitant Tortures of Hell; for to risque the *Main* without good Warrant and Caution, is Rashness, and even Fury beyond Extravagance. I have laid open the just Subject of your Fears; favour me with a full Prospect of your Hopes,



DIALOGUE VI.

The Advantage Atheists and Latitudinarians can expect if there be no God; and if all Religions are Saving, is not comparable to the Disadvantage they fear, if there be a God; and if one Religion alone be Saving.

Theom. SIR, you have assign'd me an easy Task; and I undertake it with Pleasure: You have drawn up a frightful Bill of our Losses, if *there be God*; and if *one Religion only be Saving*: I will balance it with another of our Gain, if we are in the Right; and then you'll confess our Affairs are in a better Posture than you imagine, and perchance than you wish; if we venture much, we hope for more; the Harvest balances our Labour and Expence, I know not through what Prospective you view the Pleasures of Life; Methinks, they

present us a fine Prospect; and in spite of the most severe Philosophy, dart forth too melting Charms to be contemptible. No doubt Life is a great Blessing; 'tis above Purchase, and cannot be over-rated; but then Pleasure alone raises its Value: Divest it of pleasing Sensations, and 'twill become a Burthen. Were I sure never to be pleas'd, I should unwish my self, and Bribe some *Brave* to dispatch me: I should fall out with my *Existence*, and long to return to my *Quondam Nothing*. How valuable then is Pleasure, that can set so vast a Price on so mean a Thing? And give it the first Place in our Wishes, that would take up the last in our Desires? I know ill-natur'd Philosophers, and visionary Divines, have employ'd their Rhetorick to run down Pleasure, and to talk it out of Countenance. They have libell'd it these thousand Years, and attack'd it with Auxiliaries drawn from Doggerel and Invective: Yet it stands its Ground, and maintains its Post with Reputation. Time, that lays open the Defects of other Things, has (it seems) discover'd some Perfections in Pleasure; for 'tis now courted more than ever: And this fair *Helen* has more Gallants than that of *Greece*: It grows not cheap under Trial; but rises under Use and Experiment; it neither gluts, nor surfeits; its Beauty is always in the Flower, and out of the Reach of Age. Cities have chang'd Places; Empires have sunk under the Weight of their own Greatness; new Customs have worn out the Memory of the old: But the Desire of Pleasure has never vary'd: This runs in all our Veins: We took it from our Fathers, and bequeath it to our Children; 'tis the prime End of Nature, and almost the sole Object of Inclination. Now it seems strange that all Men should dote of Deformity, and run into the Embracements of Nothing; that they should prize above all Things, what is below Price; and so turn Fools or Madmen for Company. You will perchance tell me, that I am mistaken in my Calculation; and marshal up a *Brigade* of Anchorites, to confute my Arithmetick. These Men (you'll say) made War upon Pleasure. They fasted and disciplin'd themselves into a Loathing of it; and sometimes mur'd up a Sense to fortify the Avenues against so vile, and so treacherous an Enemy. These Men therefore who thus persecuted Pleasure, were neither fond of its Charms, nor well convinc'd of its Excellence.

But

But according to the Proverb, *One Swallow makes not a Summer* ; your rare Example of Abstinence and Mortification, cannot weaken my universal Induction : They leave it in its entire Force ; nay, they strengthen it ; for you gaze on such Men as Miracles ; and propose them to the World, rather to be admir'd than imitated : Nay, they pursu'd Pleasure whilst they renounc'd it ; and so only shov'd it away with one Hand, and drew it to them with the other : For as there is oftentimes a secret Pride even in Humility ; so there is a Pleasure in Self-denial ; and all that you can prove by these Examples is, that Men's Palates have different Contextures ; and what tickles gently some, grates upon others : In a Word, to question the Goodness of Pleasure, is to deny Experiment, and contradict Demonstration.

Thus, Sir, you see if Atheists hazard Something, they hope for More : Pleasure, Satisfaction, and a most happy Life, balance all those Miseries which may befall us after Death. For my part, I cannot think, that the fondest Imagination can over-flourish, or even paint to the Life, the Happiness of those who never check Nature, but give her the Reins, and follow blindly her Directions. They can regale Ambition, feast Revenge, and treat Sensuality with Splendour : These odd Notions of Good and Evil, fume into the Head, they raise Damps on the Conscience, and dash Delights with Gall and Wormwood. If we must pen up our Appetites, and confine 'em to Limits, adieu Content. For in Reality, we properly enjoy Nothing, when we refuse our Passions any Thing. But when we follow the Bent of Nature, and swim down the Current of Inclination, 'tis then we possess a Bliss equal to your so much talk'd of Heaven. But with this only Difference that it wants Immortality. Now *Eusebius*, where is your Folly : If our Opinions are false, 'tis sure we shall be undone hereafter : But then if they prove true ; our Happiness will be greater than our Misery can be, tho' they prove false : For if we Side with the Belief of a God, and of Christian Religion, and live up to the Rigour of those Beliefs ; we discard our selves of all the Pleasures of Life ; nay, and turn it into a Torture. Now Miseries in the Hand, pinches more than Miseries in Reversion.

Eudox. *Theomachus*, you have forgot the topping Branch of our Privilege: If we believe a God, and the Mysteries of Christianity, we must enslave Reason, and regulate our Opinions by the Rules of Revelation: We must both shackle and hoodwink our Understanding, and stretch 'em on the Rack, to force 'em to deny first Principles. But when we act by our Maxims, we breath a more open and free Air: We can toss our Assent from one Side of the Contradiction to the other: And believe to Day, what we shall disbelieve to Morrow. Now this intellectual Freedom is of a finer Nature, than any Pleasure of the Sense; 'tis an Appendix of Beatitude, and a Prerogative of the Deity. Add this *Eusebius*, to what *Theomachus* has already produc'd; and you will have little Reason to lay at our Door Folly and Rashness.

Euseb. I cannot well determine *Theomachus*, whether your Speech deserves an Answer, or Indignation. Such daring Impieties surprize me. The Practice of Lewdness and Sensuality, is both shameful and scandalous. But to turn Advocate for Brutality; to canonize Debaucheries, and idolize Murders, Thefts, and Adulteries, is to throw down the Inclosures that separate Men from Beasts, to clap Reason in the Dungeon, and Sense on the Throne.

Had Bulls, Boars, and Goats the Power to harangue in our Days, as in those of *Aesop*, they would have display'd their Rhetorick on the same Subject; but, I doubt, whether they would have screw'd it up to your Pitch of Excellency. No, no; they would not have had Wit enough to crowd so many Follies, Blasphemies, and Impieties, in so small a Compass; nor Impudence to flourish on Lewdness in the Presence of Men.

So long as we keep within the Bounds of Moderation and Law, Pleasure may be tolerated; yet let unlawful Desires appear never so charming, they are certainly contemptible, because unwarrantable; and he who buys a Satisfaction (tho' never so glittering) at the Expence of Duty, is sure to over-purchase: The outward Appearance of Things, cannot be the true Standard of their Value. Tinsel glitters no less than Gold, and a false Guinea often shines more than a true one. We must wash off the *Fucus*, before we can frame a right Judgment, or distinguish Sterling from counterfeit Coin. Pleasures

ures affect the Organ well enough, but then they grate upon Reason ; they always give us a troublesome Farewell, and make room for Repentance. I am confident, Sir, that the Ghosts of your past Delights have sometimes disorder'd you more, than the living Pleasures diverted you, and you have wish'd undone in a Calm, what you did in a violent Transport of Passion.

A Man (as you say) who was sure never to be pleas'd, would have no great Reason to be over-sord of his Being. For Pain and Suffering, without any Relation to another World, are very troublesome Advantages ; but then, who can be pleas'd, when nothing but Riot and Luxury deserves no Existence : He is a Shame to Nature, and a perfect Scandal to his Kind.

You would fain draw a Proof for the Excellence of Pleasure, from the Multitude of its Abettors. But you do not consider, that you have chosen an untoward *Medium* : For Judgments are not to be fram'd by Practice, but Reason. The Generality, you know, stick in the surface of Things, and are ten Times more bigotted with Appearance than Reality. Ask the high-flown Debauchees, and they will confess their Judgments jarr with their Conduct ; they even condemn Wickedness, whilst they pursue it.

But Pleasure never gluts, never surfeits. Why then are you always on the Change ? Why do you feast your Passions with new Ragousts, but to whet your Appetite with Variety, and to entertain it with fresh Appearances ?

To say we are as eager in the Pursuit of Pleasure as our Forefathers were, proves only we carry about us the same Corruption, that our Nature bends to ill, as theirs did : And that we are all Children of the same rebellious Parent. Their Judgments varied from their Practice, and so do ours. They sought out Vaults to shade their impieties, and buried their Abominations in Darkness and Privacy : And this is a shrewd Argument, that they did not esteem much these Things they blush'd at.

Believe it, Sir, I am able to bring more than *Divines* and *Anchorets*, who have lash'd unlawful Pleasures, and burnt squ'd them. I could produce some of your own Tribe and Discipline, who deserve Credit, because they speak upon Experience. I took a Turn the other Day to the
King's

King's-Bench to visit a Friend ; I found him in the Company of some other Gentlemen, who had taken up their Lodgings in that melancholy Retirement. Discontent far on their Faces ; every Posture mark'd Impatience, and every Word both Repentance and Despair : They had out-liv'd their Estates ; and (what was worse) all Hopes of regaining 'em : I pity'd their Misfortune ; but when I understood they had Raffle'd 'em for *Wine*, and barter'd 'em for *Misses* ; my Pity turn'd almost into Indignation : I thought with my self they deserv'd no Estate, who knew so ill to manage one ; but at least, (said I with a Smile) you have had Pleasures for your Money ; and you feel even now this Satisfaction, that once you were happy. Quite contrary, (said they) our former Felicity presses harder upon us than our present Misery : And then they run out into such *Invectives* against criminal Pleasure, and rated Debauchery, with such a *Pathos* and *Energy*, that I easily saw they spoke from the Heart, and declaim'd in Earnest.

I believe those Gentlemen who lie under the Surgeon's Hands ; who are ty'd up to Fasting, and *Mercury*, and driv'd out in a Stove the Relicts of your incomparable Pleasures, are much of the *Coop'd-up Squire's* Mind. For tho' the Vintners and Harlots have not invaded their Purses, nor Luxury, like a Whirl-pool, swallow'd their Lands, yet Diseases have over-set Health, and almost sunk their Bodies into the Grave. But I have follow'd you too far, 'tis time to leave you ; only I will add, that I cannot esteem that Great, which makes me Less, and tumbles me below my Level. Reason is a Prerogative, no Nuisance ; and I am not dispos'd to Mortgage it for a *Miss*, or *Claret*.

For all your Boasting, I fear *Atheism* cannot suppress those odd Notions of Good and Evil ; they alarm your Fears, awake your Conscience, and sprinkle your Delights with the unpalatable Ingredient of Pitch and Sulphur ; but if they do not, it only follows, that your Understanding is drown'd in Sensuality, that your Wit is sunk into Frenzy ; and so that you are stark Mad with your *Mahometical* Happiness.

I confess, *Eudoxus*, that the Pleasure of the Mind has some Value ; it appears better shap'd than that of Sense ; it shines brighter ; it's longer liv'd ; and besides has No-
thing

thing of Mistiness or Brutality : But then I cannot conceive, why this Satisfaction must be solely ingross'd by Atheists and Latitudinarians : You say we must enslave our Understanding when we embrace Christianity, and regulate our Judgments by Divine Revelation : But, pray, is this such an Outrage to Reason ? Does not God know perfectly all Things ?

Eudox. He does.

Enseb. Does not his Revelation agree with his Knowledge ?

Eudox. It does ; for certainly he cannot tell a Lye.

Enseb. Now : God never commands us to believe any Mystery, unless it be evidently credible he has reveal'd it ; from whence it follows, that Christians are so far from Hoodwinking, or forcing Reason, that Men cannot act more rationally ; for thus they proceed. *Whatever God reveals is True : But God has Reveal'd the Mystery of the Trinity : Therefore it is True.* The first Proportion is evident : The second is evidently credible : For till the Revelation appear evidently credible, no Christian lies under any Obligation of believing ; and when it comes up to such an Evidence, no Man can disbelieve it, without Imprudence. 'Tis true : The Mystery remains in Darkness and Obscurity ; tho' I believe that God is *One*, and *Three* ; yet I am ignorant of the Manner ; nor, am I oblig'd to know it : God has left that as a Subject of Dispute, to exercise our Wits ; not our Faith.

Gentlemen, you see when Accounts are adjusted, you are not so much before-hand with the World, as you imagined ; but to Favour you more than I am oblig'd ; let it be granted, that Pleasures are ten times more valuable than you pretend ; at least they cannot out-last Time ; they move towards their Period ; and can accompany you no farther than the Grave ; when once you have lain on that cold Bed, Pleasures take Wing, and disappear ; your Body is made over to the Worms ; and (if there be a God) your Soul will be deliver'd into the Hands of unmerciful Devils. Sir, tell me, would you accept of the Empire of the Universe, together with all the beastial Pastimes of *Sardanapalus*, or *Heliogabalus*, if you were sure afterwards to be stretch'd on Raeks, to live on Stench, and to be regal'd with Toads and Vipers for the Space of twenty Years ?

Theo. No

Theo. No surely.

Enseb. Yet every Atheist, or Latitudinarian, cannot hope for Crowns or Scepters; they cannot gratify their Sensuality with so high-season'd Lewdness, as those two wretched Princes; notwithstanding (if there be a God) they must buy their minute Satisfaction, neither with Tortures, nor Toads, nor the Torments of twenty Years; but of Eternity: If therefore you will not purchase a temporal Enjoyment, with a temporal Punishment; why will you buy a temporal and fleeting Satisfaction, with a Punishment that is Eternal?

Theo. Pain is a very lively Perception; it flashes upon the Organ with a vast Impetuosity; and puts our whole Machine in Disorder; 'tis stronger than Pleasure, and keeps it at a Distance, when we have it not, and turns it away when we have it: Hence I would not take twenty Years of Satisfaction, with a sure Reversion of twenty Years of Pain; for this will certainly more afflict Nature, than that can please it: But the Pains of Hell, and Pleasures of Heaven, are wholly uncertain; and these of Atheists assur'd; so that tho' those Pains compar'd precisely with the Pleasures, are infinitely greater; yet, if you consider those in a State of Uncertainty, and these in a State of Certainty, we must give these the Precedence; and this is conformable to that capital Maxim; *Keep what is Certain, and leave what is Uncertain.* Give me leave to frame this short Syllogism: *'Tis Imprudence to part with what is Certain, for what is Uncertain; but the Pleasures of Heaven, and Pains of Hell are Uncertain; and those of this World are Certain; therefore 'tis Imprudence to quit the Pleasures of this Life out of Fear of falling into Hell, or out of Hope of flying into Heaven.*

Enseb. The Force of your Discourse is wound up in your Maxim, and the Syllogism is but a mere Deduction; so that if your Foundation be weak, the Superstructure falls to the Ground: Now, Sir, I must tell you; your grand Principle is not universally true; and by consequence unfit for the Post you have put it in; unless it be strain'd, and us'd with Discretion, it proves nothing but Sophistry.

For, does not the Husbandman cultivate and manure his Ground at the certain Expence of both his Ease and Money? Yet his Gain is as uncertain as the Winds and Seasons.

Seasons. Another takes up at the Temple; he sinks his Purse, and beats his Brain with plodding over *Cook* and *Littleton*; he pores Night and Day upon the *Code*, and confounds himself with the *Institutions* and *Pandects*, and hopes to beat a Fortune out of his Labour and Expences; yet tho' he certainly lays out his Money, and sacrifices his Repose; he is not certain to reach his Pretensions; his Expectation may be baulk'd; and after twenty Years, he may be no farther advanc'd in the World, than he was the first Day he set out.

Our Merchants put to Sea with a good *Cargo*; they pursue Profit into the *Indies*; the Danger of their Persons is certain, they expose their Commodities to all the Casualties of Wind and Weather, that lay before very safe in Magazines; the Gain is ill assur'd: Do not then these Men confute your Maxims by Practice? And who ever indicted 'em of Imprudence? Or tax'd 'em of Folly?

In fine, Sir, the whole Commerce of Life rous upon this Principle; that oftentimes 'tis the part of a prudent Man to quit what is certain, for what is uncertain; and were it otherwise, there would be so little Business in the World, that Mankind might sit cross-arm'd, or fall together by the Ears to avoid Idleness: Men's Understandings would grow downward, their Courages would shrink up; Industry would turn off in Lethargy, and the whole World would fall back into its primitive Ignorance.

Theo. I know the Principle comprehends a Latitude, and is not true without Restriction.

Enseb. A little Patience if you please; when I have convicted it of Error, you shall have time to argue, why Sentence should not pass upon it. When the Good we hope is equal, or inconsiderably greater, than what we hazard; it would be a piece of the highest Extravagance, to expose what we possess in Peace and Quiet, for that which is only equal or inconsiderably greater; and withal very uncertain: If by the Loss of the certain, we chance to procure the uncertain, we are but just where we were; but if we fail in our Pursuit, we shall not only fall short of what we hop'd for, but even of what we possessed: In this Case your Axiom may be allow'd of, but then it supports not your Cause; for there is no Proportion between the most lucious Pleasures of Life, which you suppose

suppose certain, and those of Heaven you suppose uncertain; for those are built on the tottering Foundation of Time; and in spite of Care, within the Space of some Years, must touch their fatal Period, and flash into Nothing; whereas these are infinitely better qualified, they stand on a stable Bottom; they never wither, never die: So that tho' we consider the Joys of Heaven in a State of Uncertainty, and those of Time in a State of Certainty; those must prevail, because the exorbitant Greatness of the Divine Joys of Heaven accompanied with an eternal Duration, are more advantageous than all the trifling Satisfactions of Sense, tho' stamp'd with the charming Attractives of Certainty and Possession.

For would any Man (who had one Grain of Prudence) accuse me of Folly or Rashness; if I should venture a Penny upon a well-grounded Presumption of gaining a Million? Would not you and all the Merchants in the Nation share in the Venture? Yet, in this Case, we should quit the Certain for the Uncertain. Now, *if there be a God, if the Christian Religion be the only Saving Communion in the World*; and you live up to the Precepts of Reason and the Gospel; after this Life you will enter upon the Possession of a Bliss that surpasses all the brutish and fond Enjoyments of Sense, more than a Million exceeds a Penny; for between these two Sums there is some Proportion, but all the Geometricians in Europe can never find a *Medium Proportionale*, between what is Temporal and Eternal.

Indeed, if you should square your Conduct by the severe Rules of Christian Morality, and afterwards find no God to recompence your Vertue; or that you might have purchas'd an equal Glory, following the more condescending Precepts of other Religions, you would be at some Loss; *i. e.* you would have debarr'd your self of some lewd Sensations to little purpose; but this Disappointment cannot be put in the Scale, against those vast Treasures you might pretend to, if there were a God, and if only one Religion were Saving: If therefore, he who should refuse to hazard a Penny on a most prudent Expectation of gaining a Million, would in the Opinion of all Mankind, commit a Folly almost too extravagant for *Bedlam* it self; why shall we fear to brand Atheists and Latitudinarians with Frenzy and Madness, who pre-

for a paultry Content before a Pleasure that is Eternal? Your grand Principle, *Leave not the Certain for the Uncertain*, cannot relieve you, because it has no place in the present Dispute; for there is no Proportion between the Happiness of the other World, which you suppose Uncertain, and the Pleasure of this, you suppose Certain; for no Arithmetick is able to multiply Moments into Eternity. Now I answer your Syllogism.

'Tis Imprudence to part with what is certain, for what is uncertain; but the Pleasures of Heaven are uncertain, and those of Life are certain; therefore 'tis Imprudence to quit the Pleasures of this Life for those of Heaven.

I distinguish the first Proposition; *'Tis imprudent to part with what is certain, for what is uncertain: If what is uncertain be considerably greater than what is certain: I deny it: If it be only equal, or inconsiderably greater; I grant it: I transmit the second Proposition; and deny the Consequence; Pray take Notice I do not grant the second Proposition; for the first Part is only true in our present Supposition; and the second is absolutely false; for those Pleasures you so much talk of, are as uncertain as any Thing can be; so that tho' your famous Axiom were never so true, 'tis impertinent to the present Dispute; seeing your Gain is as doubtful as your Loss.*

Theom. What, will you maintain our Pleasures are uncertain? If you can make that out; I confess Affairs are in a worse Posture than I fancy'd.

Enseb. I will maintain it; and demonstrate it too. Your Pleasure, Sir, consists in the Satisfaction of Sense: Now all such Satisfaction is very Expensive: *Burgundy* and *Champaigne* Wines grow not at *London*; they must pass the Seas; and before they are fit for an Atheist's Palate, the Price runs high: You must give the Vintner leave to rate 'em at Pleasure; and thank him for his Favour, if he gives you a Bottle for an *Angel*. Ragousts are as costly: Cooks will not toil for 'em, unless they be well paid; they value their Sweat as high as the Vintner does his *Champaigne*; and you can rely no more on the Conscience of the one, than of the other; for neither is strait-lac'd, and you must stand to their Mercy: If you cast up your Accounts, you will find the Taverns and Treating-Houses have eas'd you of a round Income. *Misses* are farm'd at a higher Rate; like the Monster *Bebe-*

met,

met, they drink whole Rivers; they swallow Mines, and devour Lordships: You may Rig out a first Rate Ship, at less Expence than a Lady of Pleasure: She must appear at *Hyde-Park* with a glittering Equipage; and shroud the Scandal of her Life under a Veil of Embroidery: And what is worse, she presently falls to Decay, and then the Bills of Reparation swell higher than those of the very Building: Now if you let her lie out of Repair, you either tempt her Fidelity, or her ill Nature; and then your Heaven may chance to sink into Hell: For if you resolve with Eagerness a Relief; you send her a Blank, and encourage her *Ladyship* to draw up Conditions at Pleasure; and to rise upon you at the Discretion of Avarice. You see these Pleasures are Expensive, and require a good Fund: Now, Sir, are all Atheists sure of good Estates? Have they found out the Philosophers Stone? Or have they *Midas's* Faculty, of turning whatever they touch into Gold? I cannot think that *Mannours* follow Religion; or that a beggarly Christian can start up a Money'd *Atheist*: Pleasures therefore are not over sure to every Atheistical *Profelyte*; unless you only admit *Lords* and *Gentlemen* into your Communion; and so compose your Church as the *Venetians* do their *Grand Senate* of Nobles; but even in this Case, your happy Life wants good Security: Estates, like Eels, often give us the Slip; and I have known some who began the World with Three Thousand Pounds *per Annum*, end in an Hospital: Some forfeit their Fund for Loyalty, others for Rebellion: Some Drink it away, others Dice it: Some wear it out by husbanding it too well, and others by managing it too ill: The very Foundation therefore of your Pleasures being so precarious and uncertain, the Pleasures themselves can't be assur'd.

Secondly, Without Health, the most exquisite Pleasures are dull and insipid; they rather importune, than please; and put our Patience to the Trial, rather than divert our Senses; the Harmony of a Lute, tho' touch'd by an *Orpheus*, will grate the Ear, if the Head be out of Tune; and a discompos'd Stomach receives the most delicious Ragousts with Reluctancy and Convulsions: A Fit of the *Cholick* makes a Crown uneasy, and turns all the Charms of Empire into Dissatisfaction. Now our Body is a Compound of Contraries, each Part clashes with

with its Fellow, and like the *Madianites*, draws upon its next Companion; Heat plays upon Cold; Driness upon Humidity: Whilst Victory is at a stand, our Pulse beats even; but when it leans to one Side, 'tis Time to call for a Doctor: Besides, these Hostilities are acted out of Light, or like *Miners* skirmish under Ground; and so we cannot send Relief to balance the Advantage which one may gain over the other: In fine, Sir, Health consists in an equal Temper of capricious Humours; In a good Intelligence of a thousand Veins and Arteries; and what can be more uncertain? I never meditate on the Frame and Machinism of Bodies, but I am rapt into Extasies of Admiration: And wonder more we are one Day in Health, than that we should continually groan under the Pangs of the most acute Diseases: And if all Men's Health is uncertain, the Atheists is much more; for their excessive Irregularities both hasten Infirmities, and inflame them; Debauchery revenges its own Excesses upon our Bodies, and plunges them into a State of Langour and Weakness: Health must jade; it cannot hold out, if we live too fast, and are continually upon the Gallop: And thus you make what is uncertain, more uncertain; if you do not manage your Constitution, but prostitute it, you throw it away before you have done Living; nay, when it is most useful to your Design; and so betray your Senses, and conspire against the Interest of Ease and Pleasure.

3dly, Life is the Foundation of all Happiness; on this all our Hopes and Expectation of worldly Pleasures are built: Yet this is a Thousand Degrees more uncertain, than the *Existence of a God*: We know no more, when we came into the World, than the Child unborn; and know no more when we shall leave it: Our Stay depends on a Hundred Circumstances, and our Removal on as many Accidents, we are neither able to avoid, nor foresee: An Enemy may Ponyard us into the other World; a Friend may Caress us thither: Grief sinks us into the Grave, and Joy oversets us: Nay, the Scratch of a Pin oftentimes baffles the Vertue of Drugs, and the Art of the Surgeon. The Future is to come; the Past is flown away, and neither at our Disposal; so that we are only Masters of the Present: Now Money, Health, and Life it self being so uncertain, so precarious;

ous; how can you persuade your self, that Pleasure your *summum bonum* is assur'd? But if this be uncertain, Atheists and Latitudinarians are mad to Extravagance; for then they chuse a Pack of brutish, short-liv'd, and uncertain Pleasures, before those eternal Joys of the other World, that are excessively beyond Thought, and long beyond Imagination: Now, if a Man would act foolishly, who should chuse a Crown that is uncertain, before a Million that is equally uncertain; with what Terms can I express your Frenzy; who rather lay hold on a thin, paultry, uncertain Pleasure, than a Happiness that is uncertain indeed, but withal Eternal; especially when you not only quit all Right to this exorbitant Happiness, but at the same time run up to the very Brink of Damnation; for those who reject Heaven, *ipso Facto*, accept of Hell. We have waded deep enough into this Matter. I will now draw up a short Scheme of the whole Discourse, and then leave it to your Consideration.

To shew the Unreasonableness of Atheism and Latitudinarianism, I have condescended to more than you durst ask, either in Justice or Equity, *viz.* That the Existence of a God is doubtful; as well as the Necessity of professing the Christian Religion for Salvation: Before you can pretend to Evidence, you must turn common Sense topsy turvy, and fly in the Face of Reason: I have stoopt so low as to graunt these two Points doubtful, to display the Weakness of your Pretensions, and to demonstrate, that Courtesie it self is not able to justify your Conduct.

I ground my Discourse on this Principle; when two Opinions both doubtful, both uncertain, do concur; 'tis a Folly to choose that which will ruin me, if false; and cannot turn to my Advantage, tho' true: You have subscrib'd; and indeed all Nature has put its Hand to the Principle: Now, Gentlemen, if the Opinions you embrace prove false, you will be eternally cast out of that happy Region of the Blessed, and eternally confin'd to the Pitch and Sulphur of the Reprobate. Is it possible for a wretched Creature to lose more on the one Side, or to suffer more on the other? Can any Man be more unhappy than to be banish'd from his Sovereign Happiness? Or more miserable than to be ingulph't into a State of
Eternal

Eternal Sufferings? Is not he undone, who has turn'd Bankrupt, not only of his Fortune, but even of his Hope? and has nothing left but Torments, Rage, and Despair? If your Opinions chance to be true, what Advantage can you reap but petty Satisfaction of Sense? Which rather surfeit than satisfy; and stupify more than they delight? They look big only at a Distance, and *nothing* when they draw near; they are indeed Giants in our Fancy, and Pigmies in themselves: Yet you choose these contemptible Pleasures, that avail you little while you live, and nothing when you come to die; you leave those which last eternally: Now has not such a Choice all Characters of Folly?

Pray Gentlemen set some Moments aside for Reflection: The Business is of Weight, and deserves sober Thoughts. Had you two Souls, you might send one into the next World to discover, how Things go in that unknown Region; and if that should perish in the Enterprize, you would have at least another in Reserve: But alas, you have but one; and if that Miscarry, you are lost for ever: The first Moment that lays open your Misfortune, discovers the Impossibility of retrieving it.

Theom. Come *Eusebius*, we have almost drain'd the Subject; let us change our Theam. You have arraign'd my Choice; and in your Fancy convicted it of Folly and Extravagance: I impeach you of the same Misdemeanours: Pray let us see if you can plead your own Cause with as much Art, as you have against mine.

DIALOGUE VII.

Tho' there be no God, and tho' the Christian Religion be not the only saving Religion, 'tis Prudence to believe there is a God, and that the Christian Religion is the only saving Religion in the World; and to live up to the Tenets of both.

Euseb. YOU have assign'd me an easy Province: The very opening of our Cause is sufficient to gain it. That we may not beat the Air, and shoot at Rovers, let us look back upon the old Principle, *When two uncertain*

tain Propositions lie before me; I am oblig'd by all the Laws of Prudence to choose that which will turn to my Advantage if true, and cannot Prejudice me if it be false; I have establish'd this Maxim above, and I see not how you can offer against it any thing of Moment.

Theo. Go on.

Euseb. If our Opinions are true; when once we shake off these Clouds of Clay, these Mists of Dust and Ashes, which interpose between us and Eternity, we shall be in a most comfortable Condition; for the very Moment that deprives us of Life, will repair all the Decays of Nature, all the Ruins of Time; we shall enter upon a State of Bliss, with a Spring that ever flourishes, ever blooms; upon a State inaccessible to Infirmities, unknown to Miseries above the stroke of Fortune, and out of the Jurisdiction of Death: Now to pass on a sudden from Fear to Assurance, from Sickness to Health, from Poverty to Plenty, and from Death to Life, must be a very entertaining Change: But what is this, to that Ocean of Bliss, that flows from the Face of God? One Ray struck Moses almost blind; his Mortality sunk under so glorious an Appearance, and Nature was too weak to bear the splendour of the Object, or to continue the Correspondence. The Fondness of Imagination always magnifies Temporal Pleasures; Fancy over-flourishes the Object, and paints beyond the Life; they are more gaudy in our Brain, than in themselves, and the Expectation of 'em out-weighs Possession: But the Pleasures of the other World, are above Expression, and Imagination too; nor can we take their Dimensions by what they are, but by what they are not: All that I can say, is, they put an End to Fear, a Term to Hope, and a Stop to Desire; and certainly that Creature has touch'd upon the true Point of Happiness, that neither wishes to be Greater, nor fears to be Less.

Theo. Well, well, Sir, you will indeed be very well provided, if there be a God; but suppose there be none; you will confess then that you have under-rated all the Pleasures of this Life, and sold 'em for a Dream.

Euseb. Sold 'em for a Dream say you? You lie under a great Mistake; tho' there are no such Things, as God, or Heaven, I sell 'em to Advantage, and make the most of 'em: The bare Probability of a happy Eternity, has more

more Worth, than a certain Possession of all the Advantages of Life: These Toys end in Vanity, and Vexation of Spirit; we mispend our Thoughts, we render ourselves cheap and despicable, by throwing away our Inclinations upon these Amusements: But I told you before, that those Pleasures you talk of are as uncertain as the Joys of Heaven; and in this Case, I only truck one Uncertainty for another: But then what I give, is only Temporal, and what I take, Eternal: Now, if there be a God, my Fortune is made for ever; if there be no God, I receive small Disadvantage; I only discard my self of those things that are noxious to my Body and scandalous to my Nature: At least, I live like a Man, though in the End I die like a Brute, and fall into Nothing: But do you think Christians and Atheists must forswear all Pleasure? That they must torture their Senses? And only know they live by Mortification and Torture?

Theo. They must check Passion, arrest Appetite, and curb the very Tendency of Nature to Pleasure: They must continually stand upon their Guard, and scour about for fear of a Surprise: Now these Employments are laborious and mortifying; a Man that is thus upon the Hoof, can scarce find leisure for Diversion: In short, who lives up to the Principles of your Belief, must divorce from Mirth, disband from Company, and like Toads, feed on the Poison of Spleen and Melancholy.

Euseb. We must indeed have a watchful Eye over our Passions, and keep 'em within the Bounds of Reason; we must not step over the Limits of Decency, nor exceed the Prescript of Moderation; yet we have a large Field to play in: Those Restraints are laid upon us, because an universal Liberty would undo us; and indeed I find few Actions prohibited besides those, that either debauch Health, cross upon Reason, or undermine Society: Now, who cannot be pleas'd, unless he prepares Work for the *Doctor*, unless he reveals away his Wits, or unhinges the whole frame of Commerce and Conversation, deserves like *Lions* or *Bears* to be hunted out of Society.

A Christian may pretend to some Enjoyment in this World, without forfeiting his Claim to the Delights of the other: If Providence has furnish'd him with an Estate, he may, both keep it, and use it too; nay, he may take

those Measures which Prudence and Justice shall suggest to improve it; he may aspire handsomely to an honourable Post, and clap on his Coach a *Coronet*, if he can procure a Patent; he may eat wholesome Food, and drink good Wine; so he does not clog his Stomach, nor offend his Brain: Indeed he must beware of Excess, and this, methinks, is no great Encroachment on his Freedom, no great Confinement to his Diversion; for certainly a Surfeit is not very entertaining; and a Fit of Drunkenness is no charming Trance to any but to the Spectators: If a Christian racks his Brain, shrinks his Purse, or weakens his Body with amorous Intrigues, he passes his Commission: But then he has the Freedom to marry; and what will be the Difference between him and an Atheist? But that this dotes on a Mistress, and the other places his Affections on a Wife; that the one satisfies Sense at the Expence of Duty; and the other joins Duty with Pleasure: So that upon the whole, unless Sin be the only charming Circumstance, and that nothing can gratify Sense, unless it invades our Innocence, your Advantage over us is inconsiderable: But then, we have other Advantages that balance this; our Pleasures are clean, untainted, and (what is more valuable) innocent; we enjoy 'em without Scruple, without Remorse, because without Offence; they are neither mix'd with Fear, nor Shame; nor are they follow'd by Repentance; they bear the Test of Conscience, and dare stand a Trial at God's Tribunal.

Theo. If this be all, we stand on equal Ground: My Conscience enjoys a continual Calm; it sleeps as soundly as if it had taken an Opiate, and always comes to the Lure of my Desires.

Euseb. You are slipt into a Fit of Bantering sure; a quiet Conscience to an Atheist is very extraordinary: No, no, Sir, in Spite of Debauchery and Infidelity too, it will struggle, it will turn upon you, when it finds you alone, and fly in your Face: A Dose of Claret may lay it a sleep, the Noise of Company, and the Tumults of Passion may drown its Voice, or put a stop to its Clamours; but when the Fumes are settled; when the Company withdraws, and Passion runs in its own Channel; it reads you unpleasant Lectures of Shame and Horror; it opens a full Prospect of Hell, it enlivens Fear, it calls upon

upon Despair, and conjures up a Batallion of Fiends to haunt you. Tell me, *Theomachus*, when the Candles are extinguish'd, and Sleep flies from your Eyes; when the Fire of Wine has boil'd up your Blood into a small Fever; are you not plagu'd with Doubts, and hagg'd with Apprehensions? Does not, *what if there be a God*, ring a dismal Knell in yours Ears? And toss the Disease from your Head to your Heart; would you not purchase an Assurance, that there is no God; no Reckoning with a Lordship?

Theo. Such Thoughts sometimes hover about me; but they spring from Custom and Education. I was brought up a Christian, and imbued with all the Principles of that Persuasion; I suck'd in from the Cradle those frightful Notions of Judgment and Hell; and Time has not been able to wear out those dismal Ideas: The first Tincture sticks close, and the Errors of Youth are seldom forgotten: But others who have had the good Fortune to meet with a more free Education, laugh at the Apparitions of those childish Bug-bears, first created by Nurses, and then kept up by Fancy.

Ensch. These dreadful Spectres neither owe their Being to Education, Nurses, nor Fancy; they are very real Things: Nature has stamp'd the Belief of 'em in our Soul, nor is Atheism able to deface them: These Sparks who have not lain under their Discipline; who have rang'd about the Island from their Youth, like the barbarous *Brasilians* in the Wilderness of *America*; or wild Asses on the Mountains, without Restraint, without Instruction; may hector Conscience, but cannot gag it: In spite of Debauchery it will sometimes upbraid, it will throw Crimes before their Faces, and muster up all the Forces of Guilt and Punishment to torment 'em.

Tell an Atheist, you have a Demonstration against the Being of a God; the bare Proposal quickens him; it pours into him a new Supply of Vigour and Activity; it sweetens his Nature, and throws off the misty Vapours of Spleen and Melancholy: Pray, why such Joy at the very Apprehension of no God? Is it so welcome News to hear that he must drop into Nothing? And take Leave of Existence, when he bids adieu to Life? No certainly: But Atheists know, if there be a God, they must once appear at his Tribunal, and they have no Inclination to put

the Issue of their Cause upon the Justice of his Sentence. Now, why should they fear to be condemn'd, unless they know they have done ill? And how can they dread Punishment without trembling at the Crime? Who live up to the Precepts of Christianity, fear no future Evil, because they act none hear; they apprehend no Punishment, because they deserve none. Such a Security is above Price; it exceeds the sparkling Diadems of the *Cæsars*, and all the brutish Pleasures of the Atheists. 'Tis above the Value of Gold or Diamonds, and can only be purchas'd by Vertue.

Besides, tho' we cast the other World out of the Question: Chastity, Modesty, and Temperance are honourable Qualifications; they draw Esteem, Respect, and Veneration from the most vicious; for all esteem Vertue, tho' they will not go to the Charge of the Purchase; Now, tho' we should come short of Heaven, 'tis some Satisfaction to think that at least we may leave a worthy Memory to After-ages; that our Vertue may stand upon Record to the last Moment of Time; and that our Names will not sleep by us in the Grave. *Epicurus* felt not the Fits of Stone or Gout, when he meditated on the Applause, Posterity would give his Writings: This imaginary Pleasure drown'd his real Pains, and made him enjoy a Paradise in Torments: The Violence of the Transport, either mortify'd his Sense, or inspirited his Mind. *Diogenes* preferr'd Glory before scandalous Delights; and the very Appearance of Vertue before Libertinism: He thought it worth his while to tie himself up to hard Usage, to silence the Clamours of Passions, and to leave behind him glorious Instances of Temperance and Moderation; that he might make a Figure in Annals, and raise the Fame of his Tub higher than the Trophies of *Miltiades*: And indeed there is a vast Difference between the Delights of Sense, and those of the Mind; those depend on various Circumstances, and must touch the Organ to please it: Perfumes in *Arabia* cannot affect my Nose; nor a Ragout in *Japan* regale my Palate: But the Pleasures of the Mind move in a larger Compass; they act at Distance; and are neither confin'd to Place nor Situation: By a certain Spell of natural Magick, it raises up past Pleasures; and feasts it self with Futurities: I can please my self with a Thing that is past, and frame
enters

entertaining Thoughts of what is to come : And this Privilege good Men possess ; they perceive a present Satisfaction, that they have secur'd their Memory from Obloquy and Detraction ; and that when they expire, their Actions will stand up in Defence of their Integrity : If we throw these two Advantages in the Balance, our Condition will not be worse than yours ; we shall at least go off the Stage like wise Men ; and you will jump into Nothing like Fools. But tho' we grant Atheists and Latitudinarians lead more pleasant Lives than Christians ; this cannot prejudice our Conduct : For still 'tis true, that all is little, superficial, and inconsiderable that must end. Wherefore to conclude ; if it be true, *That when two uncertain Propositions lie before me, I am obliged by all the Laws of Prudence to choose that which will turn to my Advantage if True, and cannot prejudice me if it chance to be False ;* you must confess, that tho' we are mistaken in our Success, we are not in our Choice ; and that we are rather unfortunate, than imprudent.

Theo. Well ; suppose all this true : I am not one Step nearer my Conversion than before.

Euseb. That is very strange. I have drawn out a Map of your Mistakes : I have balanc'd your Hopes with your Fears, your Hazard with your Gain ; I have made it clear to Evidence, that your Conduct passes Madness and Extravagance : Is not this sufficient to persuade you to alter it ? Has Folly so violent Attractives ? Or Frenzy such unconquerable Charms ? Is it better to burn Eternally for a Mistake, than to go to the Charge of correcting it ?

Theo. Believe me, *Eusebius*, I am not dotingly fond of Errors that cost so dear : I would willingly cast 'em off, were it in my Power ; but you know, that to serve God with a Doubt of his Being, is no less criminal, than to deny him : Now I cannot stretch my Faith to Firmness or Certitude ; I must waver on Doubts, and float on Suspicions ; for my Understanding is not at command ; it lies not under the Discipline of the Will ; Evidence alone has the Power to bend it : I confess I want Evidence, and if you'll help me to a handsome Dose, I'll return the Favour with Gratitude.

Euseb. Were you not educated in Christianity ?

Theom. I was,

Euseb.

Euseb. Did you not then believe the *Existence* of a God, and all the high Mysteries of Christianity, without Doubts or Fears?

Theo. I did.

Euseb. When you grew in Years, did you never make an Enquiry into Religion? Did you not take the Pains to inform your self why you believed, as well as what you believed? Did you take all upon Trust? And owe your Faith to the Font alone, or to the Climate.

Theo. I pass'd a great Part of my Life in Retirement; and made Reading both my Employment and Pleasure; but especially I levell'd my Study at those things that were rather profitable, than diverting; and contributed more to my future Happiness, than my present Satisfaction. Among these (I thought then) that Religion took the first Place; and in this View I fell upon Polemicks with Eagerness; and continued some time with a never-interrupted Application: My Progress answer'd my Expectation; I fancied I could defend my Religion against all Opponents, and convince any Man, if it were not evidently true, that 'twas at least evidently credible: To be plain; I never doubted of any Article, and always suspected his Judgment or Morals that did.

Euseb. Perchance those Motives have given your Memory the Slip, perchance Time and little Reflection has sullied their Lustre, and impair'd the Force of their Activity.

Theo. No, I have them all before me: But, methinks, they have another Face; they want their former Briskness and Vigour; they strike but faintly on the Brain; and tho' they move the Understanding, they cannot settle it: Their Evidence is sunk so low, that it scarce holds up to Probability.

Euseb. Upon Examen and second Thoughts; have you discover'd Sophistry? Have they fail'd under Examen, or shrunk under a due Trial of Logick?

Theo. Indeed I never put them on the Rack; nor brought them to the Test of Reason: But I have read in modern Authors such home Arguments against the Being of a God, that 'tis impossible there should be any such Thing.

Euseb. Hold *Theomachus*, you take Things by the false Handle; and begin at the wrong End. You had Proofs
for

for the Being of a God, for the Truth of Christian Religion, that flash'd Conviction so strongly, that they could not be resisted with Prudence : Now, in turning over Atheistical Neotericks, you stumble upon some Exceptions : One cannot reconcile God's Justice with his Mercy ; this seems to fall foul upon that : Another can neither look back to the first Moment of his Eternity, nor grasp his Immensity, nor comprehend his Immutability : A Third is out of Conceit with his Government : Were there a God (says he) this would happen, and that would not ; the whole Management of the World argues Chance, rather than Wisdom, and wants either Fore-cast or Power : Hence they conclude, *'Tis impossible there should be a God ; therefore there is none* : Blind Worms ! who are overpower'd with the Beams of a Planet, and dare fix their Eyes upon the Sun ; they know not themselves ; and yet would comprehend their Maker : Alas ! there is nothing so mean, but has somewhat above us. We fall under the Weight of a Straw, and are not able to dissect a Fly, or to anatomize a Glow-worm. Could I comprehend God, I would scorn to adore him : The very Notion of an infinite Being, implies Obscurity : and Reason tells me, that an Understanding confin'd to Limits, can never take a full View of a Thing that has none. Look you, Sir, you must not turn your Back to plain Truths, because you cannot answer some untoward Questions about 'em. Tho' you *Subpæna* a thousand Objections, their Evidence will not be allowed of in the Court of Reason, against positive Demonstrations ; for we seldom meet with any thing so manifest, that does not put Reason to a puzzle on some Occasions. *Zeno* argued himself out of the Existence of Motion, as you have run yourself out of the Belief of a Deity. *Motion*, says he, *is impossible, therefore there is no such thing* : But his Speculation was not receivable against clear Matter of Fact : and *Dio- genes* would not dispute, but walk'd him out of his Error. We lay before you a Hundred Arguments, that prove the Existence of a God ; you neither discover Weakness in the Principles, nor Error in the Conclusion ; but very fairly step over 'em, and fall upon God's Attributes : You rifle his Conduct, and canvass his Proceeding ; and then because your purblind Reason is put to a *Nonplus*, and baffled in the Inquiry, you conclude his *Essence is impossible*.
Possibi-

Possibilities would be drawn up in a narrow Compass, if all things were impossible that confounds our Understanding: Follow my Advice, Gentlemen, reform your Manners if you intend to believe.

Theo. Had I Faith, Vertue would follow: But how can I mortify Appetite, when I have no Assurance either of Reward or Punishment.

Euseb. Quite contrary: Bid farewell to your Crimes, and then you will have no Difficulty to believe; whilst 'tis your Interest there should be no God; that Christianity should be an Imposture; you will believe neither, for Interest sways our Judgment, as well as it commands our Actions, and Demonstration it self is less persuasive: 'Tis an Error to think our Will has no Jurisdiction over our Reason; it exercises its Tyranny every Day over that noble Faculty; it treats it like a Slave, rather than a Princess; and Atheists commit Rapes upon their Reason, as well as upon the Sex: Do you not believe you were lawfully begotten?

Theo. I do.

Euseb. And yet you have only your Mother's word for it: But should she declare the contrary; I suspect you would not pay the same Deference to her Authority: Now why do you believe her in the one Case with so much Easiness? Why do you disbelieve her in the other? I suppose her *Negatives* are not less credible than her *Affirmatives*; and that she deserves Belief when she denies, as well as when she affirms. Here is the Difference: 'Tis your Interest to be lawfully begotten; and to be thought so: On this account you enter upon your Father's Estate, and his Titles: But then to come in at the Back-door is a mortifying Disadvantage; it cuts off the Right to Succession, and besides throws an Aspersions on your Person: Now, tho' the Motives in both Cases are the same, and Will byas'd by Interest rides the Understanding; and forces it to assent to the first, and to dissent from the second: If you shake off ill Habits; if you walk within the Bounds of Moderation and Temperance, and confine your Thoughts and Actions to what is lawful; you will presently look upon God, and Religion, as things advantageous to you; because one promises Rewards, and the other will pay 'em; and then prudential Motives by the Power of the Will, can easily draw and fix the Understanding

standing in the Belief of Truths you now boggle at: But if you persevere in Lewdness, and make over your Heart to Licentiousness; if you dare not look another World in the Face, nor take a survey of Hell without almost feeling the Pains; you will never firmly believe there is a God, nor frame any tolerable Notion of Religion; for a stable and settled Persuasion of those Things, runs so contrary to your present Interest, that the Will in Spight of Evidence it self, will fool the Understanding; and either withdraw its Attention from the Consideration of the Argument, or by some sly Trick of *Legerdemain* delude it: No Man in the World ever deny'd a God before he fear'd him; he first deserv'd Damnation, and then thrust Justice out of Being: And so, *Eudoxus*, I fancy you quarrel'd with the Morals of Christianity, before you fell out with the *Creed*; and all Religions then only began to please you, when Restraint became cumbersome. However, *Theomachus*, in our following Conference I will attack your Understanding; and I hope to propose so strong Arguments, as will be able to fix it in the Belief of a God.

In the mean time dismiss Pride, and turn off Prejudice; this blinds Reason, and that over-looks it; the one will not see Truth, nor the other stoop to embrace it: You must not search after Truth, as if you fear'd to find it; such Pursuits are nothing but Ceremony and Grimace, they are Symptoms both of Folly and Obstinacy, and infallible Marks that you have some sinister Design, either to put a Cheat upon your self, or to cast Scorn and Contempt upon your Adversary. Those Arguments I shall propose, examine in God's Name; dissect the whole Discourse; weigh the Principles: measure the Inferences by all the Rules of Mood and Figure: But then fall not upon *Criticism*, as if your whole Business were to find Faults, not Truths; to quarrel with 'em, not to assent: Suppose 'em not Counterfeit, before you have brought 'em to the Touch-stone: Again, pray remember there is a great Difference between Words and a good Solution: To return an Answer, is not to enervate a Proof; we may talk much, without talking to the Purpose; and hover about a Question, without coming up to the Point: And as you must take care not to be too great in your own Opinion; so others must not be too little: For Men
scorn

scorn to learn of those they contemn: And besides, the least Intelligence from such a Quarter, will be thought Apocryphal: For we measure the Force of Arguments by the Abilities of the Proposer, and always presume they cannot rise above his Height that made them; so that if we under-rate an Adversary, we shall by a necessary Consequence despise his Reasons: For a small Prepossession creates ill Notions, and these byass the Judgment, and give a wrong turn to the Scale.

But above all things; implore the Succour of that great Being, whose Existence you doubt of: Tell him you are in Quest of his *Existence*, not only to know his Perfections, but to adore his Majesty, to love his Goodness, and to sue for Mercy. Desire him with Tears and Sighs, to dispel those Mists that darken the Understanding, and to dash in Pieces those Chains of Sensuality that fetter the Will; that you may be so fortunate as to see the Truth of his Being, and so courageous as to embrace it: For the Activity of a Cause answers the Disposition of the Subject: All the Light in Nature will make no Impression on a disorder'd Eye: Fire may consume a Member struck with the Palsie, but cannot heat it into Sensation; and Demonstration may shine upon the Understanding, but this will remain in Darkness, and grope in Obscurity, unless the Will be put in Order; and the Veils of Prejudice, Pride, and Licentiousness be remov'd: Now, this is the proper Business of Grace, which God will send to your Assistance, if you ask it with Patience and Sincerity: But if you will live on your own Fund, if you will engage with a Resolution not to yield; or dispute merely to overcome; you will live an Infidel, and die a Reprobate: All Arguments will only serve to harden your Heart, to inflame your Guilt, and heighten your Obstinacy.



D I A L O G U E VIII.

Eudoxus is not satisfy'd with Theomachus's Answers.

AFTER some Civilities, *Eusebius* took leave of his Adversaries, and *Theomachus* conducted him to his Coach; he

he promis'd to appear the next Day, and to carry on the Conversation: In the mean time *Endoxus* found himself in some Disorder above Stairs: This Conference had batter'd his Confidence, awak'd his Conscience, and alarm'd his Fears: He had only enlarg'd his Belief to make Room for Debauchery, and would needs save all Men not to damn himself: Restraint was his best Argument against the Necessity of Christian Religion for Salvation, and nothing drew him into such a Latitude of Belief, but an uncontroll'd Liberty of Acting: But when he heard from *Eusebius* the Danger he run, and the Hazard he expos'd himself to; he found his Blood in a Ferment, and all the Faculties of his Soul in an Uproar: He walk'd about the Room in such a musing Posture, that *Theomachus* (now return'd) could not tell what to make of this mute Scene: His Motion represented a Farce; his Looks a Tragedy; and both seem'd extraordinary amazing. What said *Theomachus*, are you wrapt in an Extasy, and fallen over Head and Ears into Speculation? What turn'd Philosopher *ex tempore*? Your Face has no metaphysical Turn; lay down the Disguise, and put on your Shape, you make an odd Figure in Masquerade.

Endox. Is Seriousness so unbecoming? I am sorry to hear Gravity sits so unhandsomely upon me, and that I cannot put on a thinking Countenance, without acting the Comedian: However, I hope you will excuse me; your Conference has given me some Reason to look demurely.

Theom. With all my Heart, upon Condition you'll not turn thinking into a Practice; for, I tell you again, a stoical Comportment agrees ill with your Constitution, and a contemplative Humour will soure the Blood, and cast you into Fits of the Hypochondry. Methinks, I can read the Subject of your Meditation on your Face: I have travell'd far in Physiognomy, and have drawn up a Map of that Country: In fine, Sir, the Aspect is fitted up for Conversation, as well as the Tongue; and like the *Spartans*, comprehends much in a little; it explains a Man's Mind more clear, than one can speak it: You are now availing out some petty Revenge against *Eusebius*, and indeed he deserves a Mortification for his Sophistry: He talks with such a magisterical Confidence, as if he vented nothing but Evidence: He is a kind of spiritual Hector, and banters People into Subjection and Slavery: He has an

an imposing Air, and varnishes his Reason with such Assurance, that unthinking Gentlemen mistake one for the other: But you saw how I teased him.

Endox. I cannot tell what Judgment you frame of this Morning's Contest, but I counsel you not to crow or cry *Victoria*; let it pass for a drawn Battle; he may otherwise think of the Press, and if the Action takes Air, and appears in View, perchance the Publick may pronounce against you. We are often fond of our own Exploits, and easily turn the Advantages upon our selves; whereas, God knows, impartial Readers may give it to our Adversaries, and lay Dishonour at our Doors. I must own, I wish you had done your Part better, or that *Eusebins* had done his worse: I find my interior in a Flame: I feel an unknown War in my Breast: Your Conversation has rais'd it; my Fears are enliven'd, and tho' I am not in Hell, methinks, I deserve it.

Theom. Certainly you rave, you have a feverish Distemper upon you, and the malign Humour has seiz'd upon the Brain: I never saw a Man before, sound under an Argument, or discours'd into a *Calenture*: You take Apprehensions for Things, and turn a good Nature into an Executioner: Your Troubles are but Dregs of Education, or airy Spirits that rise from Prejudice: Time will wear 'em out, or Courage will daunt 'em; bear up with Resolution, and you'll scare your Frights, and look those dreadful Bugbears out of Countenance.

Endox. I had rather you would reason 'em out of Countenance: Uncertainty has begot 'em; and I fancy Certainty would destroy 'em. Ah *Theomachus*! If there be a God, you are undone; and if Christianity be the only saving Religion, I am undone also.

Theom. Fie, Fie: I took you for a Man of Parts; for a Man above Fear, and out of the Reach of Apprehension. I tell you there is no God, and by consequence that Christianity is nothing but pure Mummery and Imposture: 'Tis a poetical Engin, fram'd by crafty Statesmen, to heave Men into their Duty.

Endox. But did you not confess to *Eusebins*, that you were certain of neither?

Theom. Prithee ask no Questions: Let us take a turn to the *Blue-posts*: *Canary* clears more Controversies in an Hour, than Disputes in an Age: A Glass of good Wine

carries off a Doubt in a Trice, and I have found by Experience, that Fears are sooner drank, than reason'd away.

Eudox. The present Business is too serious to be debated in a Tavern; and I had rather argue, than laugh with you. If I comprehend *Eusebius* right, we are in ill Circumstances: For tho' it happen that we are nothing in the next World, we are without peradventure Fools in this. For, look you, Sir, both our Tenets are very uncertain, and by legal Inference may be false; if they are, what will become of us? Can any Creature sink into a more desperate Misfortune, than we shall certainly meet with? Can we lose more, than by forfeiting all? Or can we suffer more, than when we fry in Flames for an Eternity? I confess this Eternity strikes a Damp through every Joint: I dare not play with Thunder, nor stand the Stroak of the Omnipotent. On the other side, though the other Tenets prove true; what are we the better? *First*, Those Pleasures we pretend to, are as uncertain, as that *Hell* we now ridicule; as that *Heaven* we burlesque. *Secondly*, Suppose they were most certain, they are not able to render us happy when we Die, nor content whilst we Live; they only serve to engender Diseases, to provoke Conscience, and to prey upon our Estates: They are Things beneath a rational Creature, not worth enjoying, nor even the contending for: Now seeing there is such an immense *Chaos* between our Hopes and our Fears; such a monstrous Disproportion between our Loss and our Gain, how is it possible for Men to swerve more palpably from the common Dictamens of Prudence than we.

Theom. I tell you, the Immortality of the Soul is a mere Flourish of Fancy. 'Tis a platonick Idea form'd at *Athens* some thousands of Years ago, and wafted from beyond Seas in our *Smirna* Fleet.

Eudox. Could you prove your Assertion, my Fears would be at an End: I would laugh at my present Frights, and sport with those Flames I tremble at. I am not yet cloy'd with Liberty, nor surfeited with Mirth; nor am I so besotted with Pleasures of Sense, as to charge through Fire and Brimstone for their Sake: But you have granted to *Eusebius*, that this very Point has no more Certainty, than that of the Existence of a Deity:

So that tho' you Name it a Fable ; or ought we know it may be a real Story.

Theom. But do you remember I told *Eusebius*, that a tottering Belief of a God, or of Christianity, would not do our Turns, tho' we bridled our Passions, and bound up our Appetite to Penance and Mortification : Now if you have in Store an Argument, that can convey Conviction, impart it to your self, and stand to the Belief of Christianity with Resolution : But if you have not, and there be a Hell ; a wavering Faith, tho' waited on by all the Vertues of the most rigid Recluse, conducts you to Destruction, as surely as Debauchery : Of the two, give me therefore a pleasant Life, and a wretched Eternity, rather than a miserable Life, and a miserable Eternity ; for of two Evils I am for the less.

Eudox. I confess I am at a loss for such an Argument ; yet my Mind gives me, that Industry may make a Discovery, either for the one Side, or for the other ; that is, we may fall upon a *Medium* that will unriddle the Mystery ; and either certainly convince us, that all the Dreads and Terrors of a future State are Fiction and Imposture, or that they are real Things ; for if the Case stood otherwise, I should be tempted to *Timonize*, and clap a Satyr upon our whole Species : I should break its Escutcheon, and throw its Titles of Honour upon *Bears*, *Lyons*, and *Tygers* : For certainly Man with his pompous and magnificent Prerogatives of Reason, would sink below the level of the vilest Insect ; because his Lot would be Fear, and tormenting Thoughts here ; and perchance more tormenting Fire hereafter : Beasts, poor Creatures, neither waste their Spirits with the towering Pretensions of Place, nor Precedency ; nor with the carking Appetite of Having, nor with the troublesome Apprehension of Losing : Their Care neither looks backward nor forward ; their only Labour is to fence against the present Necessity ; they neither expect any Advantage from the future, nor any Misfortune ; they desire not to be better, nor fear to be worse : They gently glide down the Tide of Nature, and sail down contentedly with the Current of Inclination : All their Pains and Pleasure expire with their Life, and when their Taper is spent, and burnt within the Socket ; they lay down to Sleep, and evaporate into *Nothing* : But alas ! poor Man, is tantaliz'd with pleasant

pleasant Dreams of a future Felicity, and haunted with frightful Spectres of never-ending Miseries; yet according to your new *Theology*, he is not able to discover whether these things have any real Being, but in Imagination: What is this but to hang him on the Tenters? But to stretch him on the Torture? And to make his chief Privilege, *Reason*, subservient to his Torment? There may be a God, (say you,) a Hell, a Heaven, and one only saving Religion: If these things are true, and we live as if they were false, we are lost: On the other side, if they are false, and we check Appetite, and conform our Actions to the most rigid Morality; we labour in vain, and take pains to meet with Disappointment: But then again, if they chance to be true, though we live piously, if we believe not stedfastly, our Business is done: We must pitch our Tents with the *Libertines* and *Atheists*, and keep Company with the unfortunate Fry of the Reprobate. 'Tis true, could we believe without Doubts, a little Mortification of our Passions, some Restraint upon Appetite, might secure us; but this (you say) is impossible, because there are not to be found in Nature, Motives sufficient to settle our Judgments in a firm Belief, either of a Deity, or of Religion; so that in spite of Fate, of Prudence and Vertue, poor Men must agonize here under all the dreadful Convulsions of Fear; and (if there be a God) under the Weight of his Revenge hereafter: This is a murdering Doctrine *Theomachus*; and if true, you must conclude, that Nature is a Step-mother to Man; and that God created him in his Fury; that he grac'd him with Knowledge, to fit him up for Misery: Let us rather say, we may find some Thread, if we take the pains to look about us, to guide us out of this wandering Labyrinth: We may dive into things, till we fall upon Certainty; and discover whether Impostures lies on our Side, or theirs who oppose our Principles: But, Sir, I have (I fear) trespass'd upon your Patience, and perchance good Breeding also: But pray charge my Disorder with these Failings, and take an Excuse for Attenuation.

D I A L O G U E IX.

EUDOXUS *unsatisfied with the Discourse of THEOMACHUS, goes to EUSEBIUS.*

*E*udoxus return'd to his Lodgings with a heavy Heart : He gave Scope to his Fancy, which warm'd with the Morning Dispute, was become ungovernable : It flew from one dismal Apprehension to another, till at length it wandred into Hell, and drew out all the Terrors of that wretched Region to scare him : The Contemplation of that Place of Torment, of Fire, Darknes, and Despair, squeez'd out Tears, Sighs, and Lamentations. Woe be to me, said he, when I die here to Pleasure, if I live hereafter to eternal Pains : This may be my Fate, and certainly will be, if Christianity be the only saving Religion, and there be any Punishment for Infidelity : I say it will be ; unless I lay aside both Doubts and Lewdness : This is an Affair of the highest Consequence ; it deserves my Solitude, and will reward my Labour with Interest, which way soever it turns. I will therefore think of no other Business, till I have brought this to a happy Conclusion : By the Success of this I must stand or fall.

The Resolution was taken ; but he soon found himself in an unknown Region, without Stars, Map, or Guide, to steer his Course by : He pursued Certainty, but knew not in what part of the Globe it dwelt, or where to address himself for Direction. First, He thought to fall upon Reading ; for Books being the Product of Time and mature Thoughts, are generally polish'd ; they tell us how far our Understanding can go towards the Discovery of Truth ; and leaving Impertinencies behind, draw off the Spirits and Essence from the Subject : But then he was at a puzzle about the Choice : Bad Books (said he) are as contagious as lewd Company ; and (what is worse) more frequent, and more affecting ; for they are set off with luscious Expressions, and with quaint Language, which carries down the Poison with Pleasure. Like Ladies, they never appear in Publick, but under gaudy Dresses ; and care is taken to wash over the Foulness of the Subject with a pleasing Tarnish : A Man may

well learn Chastity in the Stews, Temperance in Taverns, Honesty in *Newgate*, Meekness among Hectors, and the Belief of a God among Atheists, as Christianity among these wretched Pamphlets. An ill Subject well handled, doubles the Danger of reading it; the Mischief rises with the Wit, and infects in Proportion to the Art of the Author. In fine, he was toss'd from Resolution to Resolution, without knowing which to resolve on; till at length he reflected of *Eusebius*: 'Tis true, he had no Acquaintance with the Gentleman, but being taken with his Morning's Discourse, he was satisfied of his Capacity, and judg'd favourably of his Probity. These Considerations made him break through all Difficulties, and the present Aches of his Mind, added Wings to the Desire of finding a Lenitive.

He went therefore out of Hand to *Eusebius's* Lodgings, and laid open the State of his Interior; he conjur'd him by all that's Sacred to lend his Assistance; and, if possible, to cure that Wound himself had made: He spoke with a Vehemency, that easily persuaded *Eusebius* he was in Earnest; and his Suit was too just to receive a Denial.

Sir, said *Eusebius*, you have address'd your self to a Person, that is perchance less able, than willing to assist you: I assure you of my Readiness; the Issue must answer for my Ability. I am glad (pardon the Expression) of your Distemper: When we feel the Disease, there is Hopes of a Cure; but when we have no Sense of our Condition, 'tis time to think of a Coffin. Neither spurn, nor kick at Providence for this painful Usage: The Operation (no doubt) is sharp, but withal necessary: Health of the Body is not recovered without Pain; an Imposthume calls for a Lance, and Oppletion for unpalatable Evacuatories. The same Methods are applicable to Diseases of the Soul: Whilst Conscience suffers Debauchery without Murmur, without Complaint; whilst we enjoy a profound Peace within us, in the midst of Crimes, as well as of Innocence, we find no Inclination to reform: That false Tranquility lulls us asleep, it keeps serious Reflections at a Distance, and persuades our foolish Credulity, that no Danger threatens us, because we apprehend none: But when Offences sit uneasy upon us, when Pleasures gall us, when Infidelity becomes

suspected, and Lewdness it self troublesome ; we begin
 to survey our Conduct, to compare the Present with the
 Future, to face our Hopes with our Fears, and the De-
 lights of this Life with the Torments of the other : And
 when we discover those gross Illusions we lie under, a
 little struggling with the Help of God's Grace, will break
 thro' all Impediments which interpose between us and
 our Duty : Take therefore this Anguish of Mind as a
 Pledge of God's Kindness, and of your future Felicity ;
 he strikes in his Mercy, as well as in his Justice ; he
 heals when he wounds, and spares when he punishes :
 Never defer the search of Truth, nor falter till you
 have found it : Slackness in a Point of this Importance is
 always dangerous, and sometimes mortal : When we
 refuse God's kind Invitation, he often chastises our Inci-
 vilities in *Flagranti*, and scarce leaves a Moment between
 the Affront and the Revenge. When I was some Years
 ago in *Flanders*, an Officer of my Acquaintance gave me
 a Visit ; he was one of those, who make no Distinction
 between Religion and Faction ; who jest at Faith, and
 spend their Lives in its Service : He could no more be-
 lieve that Church true he fought for, than that he fought
 against : He ridicul'd the one, and contemn'd the other ;
 he treated Morality ill in his Discourse, but worse in
 Practice : I thought a little Warmth and Expostulation
 were justifiable on such an Occasion, and so I took him
 up roundly ; I drew out in lively Colours the Horror
 of his Life, the Unwarrantableness of his Proceeding,
 and the Severity of those pains God had prepar'd for Li-
 bertines in the next World ; together with the Curses that
 would fall upon his Head in this : He took leave of me,
 and retir'd to his Inn, but after Dinner he return'd : I
 have often (said he) receiv'd Proofs of your Kindness, but
 never greater than this Morning : I have look'd into my
 self since I saw you ; and confess my Case would be de-
 sperate, had I less than an infinite Mercy to confide in :
 Some urgent Business calls me to my Garrison ; but next
 Week I will return, and advise with you about the grand
 Affair of my Salvation. This is a Call from God (and
 I answer'd I) and perchance it may be the last : The *Cam-
 paign* draws near ; and when once you have taken the
 Field, you will neither be Master of your Time, nor your
 Life ; your Employment challenges *that*, and a Bullet
 may dispose of *this* before you are aware,

I am sensible (reply'd the Gentleman) of my Case, and of the Danger; and nothing shall alter my Resolution; and so he departed. He kept his Word, and within ten Days return'd: He pass'd by my Lodgings, and told me he would not fail after Dinner to wait upon me, and hop'd to bring his Business to a happy Conclusion: Permit me, Sir, (said I) to attend you at your Inn: 'Tis much more easy to fall into Company, than to disengage your self: Men of your Calling, had rather storm a Half-moon, than assail Custom, or attack Ceremony: But he would not hear of my Proposition; he left the Company, and was on his way; when unfortunately he met with a Friend, who invited him to a Bottle of *Champaigne*: He would not accept of the Invitation; but the other would not be deny'd: And so at length away they march'd together: One Bottle drew on another, and their Debauch ended with the Night: In the mean time, an Express calls him to his *Regiment*: The *French* have taken the Field; and all must march to watch their Motions: He returns Home in Post; he goes to the Camp, and shortly after loses his Life at *Steenkirk*: We may truly say, this poor Gentleman was near Heaven; but God send the unhappy Rencounter of a Friend did not put him out of the way! He was invited to Repentance, he made a fair Advance; and (I may say) the Business was almost finish'd, because he seriously resolv'd to conclude it: But a Bottle of *Champaigne* put in a Demur: It suspended the Execution; and then the sudden March of the Troops broke off the Negotiation: He went to the Field a *Libertine*, and in all Probability dy'd one: As God touch'd his Heart, so he has softened yours: Pray, Sir, let not Negligence misuse the Favour, nor turn it into a Curse: Let it stand up for you at God's Tribunal, as a Witness of Gratitude, not of Obstinacy. I counsel you for some Days to withdraw into a place of Retirement: Visits will distract you, and may stifle your pious Resolution, if your Design takes air: If your Companions learn you are going into another Interest, they will raise a hundred Batteries against your Constancy; and though you come off with Victory, you will not get clear of their Temptations without Danger: I will willingly wait upon you into the Country, if you can pitch upon a convenient Place.

Eudox. You will infinitely oblige me: My House is but four Miles off; and if you please, we will take Coach this Evening.

Euseb. I am content, but I must excuse my Departure to *Theomachus*, otherwise he may send *Hue and Cry* after me; and *Si quis* me in the next *Gazette*.

He sent him a Letter to let him know, that a Business of Importance requir'd his Presence in the Country; that he would dispatch it with convenient Speed, and that the same Moment his Hands were rid of that Trouble, he would return to prosecute the Conference. *Theomachus* answer'd he was his own Master; that he might take his Time, and that he would expect his Return with Pleasure: They immediately took Coach, and arriv'd at *Eudoxus's* House.



DIALOGUE X.

EUDOXUS retires with *EUSEBIUS* into the Country, where they meet with *ARIOVISTUS* a High-flown Latitudinarian.

EUDOXUS's Mother receiv'd her Son with Tendernefs: She was a Lady of a Piety above the common; she lov'd her Son, but could not dissemble his Vices: She often admonish'd him of the Danger he expos'd his Soul to; and sometimes mingled Tears with gentle Reproofs: But his time was not yet come, and all her Admonitions only serv'd to heighten his Obduracy: Yet she gave not over: She implor'd God's Assistance in private, and beseech'd his Mercy to strike out of this Rock some Tears of Repentance; to recal this Prodigal, who had imbezzell'd all his Treasures of Grace, and pawn'd his Religion to Prostitutes: Her Friends admir'd her Charity, and pity'd it. Once a *Divine* assur'd her, that a Child of Tears would never perish: She took the Words for an Oracle, and fancy'd he spoke by Inspiration: Though her Son's Profaneness touch'd her to the Quick, the Hopes of his Conversion kept her in Heart; and the more he ran from Piety, the more she practis'd it.

When

When *Endoxus* arriv'd, she read some Change in his Face ; his Behaviour was more grave ; his Looks more sober, and all his Carriage breath'd an Air of Modesty : At first she suspected the Dice had run cross, and that the Cause of his Melancholy lay in the Pocket : Then she fear'd he was hammering out some amorous Intrigue, or lay under the Mortification of a criminal Disappointment : But *Endoxus* soon dissipated her Suspicions, by telling the Cause of his unexpected Arrival : She was over-joy'd at the News, and almost sunk under the Excess : She gave *Eusebius* a thousand Thanks, and stil'd him her Son's good Angel : They were sitting down to Supper, when in comes *Ariovistus* with another Gentleman. The Lady was surpriz'd at the Arrival of so unexpected a Guest ; his very Sight drew the Blood to her Face, and though she was Mistress of her Words and Actions, she could not command her Resentment : She fear'd least this importune Visit might nip her Son's Resolutions, and dash in Pieces the Hope she had of his Conversion : However, she forgot not Civility in the very Heat of her Disturbance, and skreen'd off her Concern with a hearty Welcome.

But after Supper she took *Eusebius* aside, and expos'd her Fears with all the Energy of Tears and Passion. Sir, (said she) God send your Charity meet with Success : I suspect *Ariovistus* cloaks some ill Design under the specious Outside of a Visit, and that another Errand brought him here, besides mere Civility : His Morals run even with his Religion ; he believes what flatters Pride, and acts whatever fawns upon Sense ; he goes upon one Principle, which is to stick at nothing, that sides with Interest, or gratifies Appetites. This Man first furnish'd *Endoxus* with corrupt Maxims, and *Theomachus* taught him the Application : In fine, both have contributed to his Destruction, and my Misfortune.

Eusebius desir'd her not to take the Alarm. I will find Occasion (said he) to ingage *Ariovistus* in a Dispute, I doubt not of the Success : The overthrow of the Master may work upon the Scholar. He may yield to these Reasons *Ariovistus* (I am sure) will not be able to resist. The next Morning, when they sat together in the Parlour, Chance gave the cue to a hot Debate, that cover'd *Ariovistus* with Confusion, and *Eusebius* with Glory.

DIALOGUE XL.

God does neither command, nor permit us to conform to the Religion of the Country where we live.

THE Post brought *Endoxus* a News Letter from London, which gave an Account of new Laws enacted against Papists.

Ariov. This Act is worthy of that great Assembly. I have nothing against the Proceedings, but that it's too moderate and indulging: Besides, methinks it should have reach'd all Dissenters; for all being guilty of Obstinacy, none should be exempt from Punishment.

Enseb. How? Too Indulging? What will you call severe? Papists are disseiz'd of their Birth-right, strip'd of Property, and expos'd to the Insolence of villainous Informers and Catch-polls; and after all, you complain of Moderation. Mistake me not, Sir, I neither arraign the Wisdom nor the Justice of the *Parliament*: That *August Body* may have Reasons unknown to us: But I disapprove your persecuting Humour: Dissenters are our Fellow-Subjects; the Relation deserves Tenderneß, and calls for some Compassion: It's Barbarity to out-rage a Fellow at the Bar, or to insult over a condemn'd Wretch at Tyburn; much more over Dissenters; who for ought we know, have no other Crime, but their Religion.

Ariov. Let them conform, and they shall enjoy the Protection of the Government, and the Liberty of *Englishmen*: But if they take the Pet, and stray from the Establish'd Worship of the Realm; the Common-wealth must take Notice of their Prevarication, and punish it: And as those who suffer for the Breach of Laws, die deservedly; so they who lay down their Lives for any Religion Out-law'd by the Common-wealth, are Malefactors, not Martyrs: They only pass through one Punishment into another: Thousands (*Ensebins*) are canoniz'd here on Earth, that will never be *Sainted* in Heaven.

Enseb. Hold, Sir, this Doctrine should be Bleach'd; it's so monstrously foul, there is no enduring it: It should pass a *Quarantaine* in some *Lazaretta*; (methinks) it smells

smells Rank of Infection. Blasphemy sits on every Syllable: What think you? Did St. *Laurence* and St. *Stephen* die like Criminals? Are not their Names Register'd in the Book of Life, as well as in the Martyrologue? Yet they died for a Religion, condemn'd by the Supreme Authority of *Rome* and *Jury*. Sir, I would have you dispute this Point at the *Old Baily*. Blasphemy is punish'd with Fire in this World, as well as in the next.

Arise. Heat and Invective rather fret an Adversary, than convince him: More Reason, and less Passion, are proper for a Man of your Age and Character; you are on the Decay, Sir; your Deportment should be as cold as your Blood; and your Passions as grey as your Head. I say, God made Man for Commerce, we cannot live on our own Fund; we must barter with our Neighbours; and this foreign Correspondence is requisite to furnish our Happiness: A sociable Life is impracticable, (I would say impossible,) unless Inferiors lie under an indispensable Obligation of obeying, and Superiors have an uncontrollable Power to ordain all those Things, that are necessary to support and conserve Society.

Now, what can be more necessary than Union, and Harmony of Opinions? This cements all the Parts, and moulds them into one great Body: It inspirits them to Action in their design'd Station: It combines their Interest; and by consequence their Endeavours: But when their Minds are divided, their Interests are separated, and then they club into Faction; and whilst each Cabal drives at private Ends, the whole Fabrick of the Government first Totters, and then falls into Confusion. But of all Divisions, those that spring from Differences in Religion have ever prov'd the most fatal. Zeal has open'd more Veins than Cruelty; and laid waste more Provinces than Ambition: It has rifled those very Places, Avarice it self left untouch'd; and set on Fire those Religious Edifices, Impiety revered: It has brought some Princes to the Scaffold, and others to Abdicate: In fine, new Seditions break in upon the State with new Religions, and the Establish'd Government is always struck at, with the Establish'd Church. Pretence of Piety leads the *Van*, but *Sword*, *Cannon*, and *Desolation* bring up the *Rear*.

Seeing

Seeing therefore God commands us to live in Society; he has empower'd the chief Magistrate, with a full Commission to enact those Laws that are requisite for the furthering this great Design: Now, nothing under Heaven can be more necessary, than a Power to establish Religion; therefore God has entrusted every supreme Magistrate with that Power; whence it follows, that every Religion settled by Law, binds all those who live under the Protection of that State; and by consequence I dare not excuse any *Dissenter* from Treason, both against the Common-wealth and God.

In a Word, we must conform our Belief to that of the Country where we live; nor can any Pretence of Conscience or Revelation exempt us from the Obligation: Hence, I say, that *Stephen* the *Deacon* lost his Life at *Jerusalem*, as fairly as *Stephen* the *Joyner* at *Oxford*: They both fell by the Law, and therefore justly. Death makes not a Martyr, but the Cause; this alone distinguishes the Innocent from the Guilty.

Euseb. Bless me! Where are we? The Jews tore their Garments, when they heard Blasphemies; but Christians turn it into Entertainment: Certainly nothing but Damnation is able to force out such flaming Expressions: Your Discourse is too rank to undergo a Dissection; it carries with it a Complication of Crimes, that won't bear the very naming: Like flagitious Malefactors, they infect on the *Hurdle*, and kill at their Execution: It's almost safer to dissemble, than to arraign them; and they are taught, whilst they are reprov'd: But seeing you have flung Poison among the Audience, I'll venture to present them an Antidote. You say *St. Stephen* dy'd a Rebel, no Martyr; that he fell by Law, and consequently by the Hands of Justice: But this hellish Logick argues our blessed Saviour into Rebellion, and stigmatizes him for a convicted Conspirator; for certainly he died by Command of the Magistrate: Innovation in Matters of Religion made up one part of the Charge against him, and Treason the other. I suppose this horrid Insolence lay out of Sight; for Gentlemen of your Persuasion, are short-sighted; and are so taken up with Principles, that they over-look Illations: Remember, Sir, we live under a pious Princess, and a reforming Parliament; so that I do not Despair within some Days to hear, that severe
Laws

Laws are past against those that Blaspheme God, as well as against those that serve him.

Ariovistus began an Apology, but *Eusebius* refus'd to hear it.

Sir, (said he) the Text is too plain to need a *Comment*; and too horrid to deserve one: To excuse Blasphemy, is but a Hairs-breadth from defending it: The very Hearing of the *Word* abates the Horror of the *Crime*: For no Offences are less detested, than those that are often spoken of: Besides, I have only glanc'd at an Inference; the Principle is more flagitious, and therefore must be brought to the Bar. You say God commands us to conform to the Religion of the Country where we live; and that to profess any other, or to believe nothing, is equally criminal.

Ariov. I say so.

Euseb. Is your Assertion Universal?

Ariov. It takes in all Religions; it reaches all Nations, as well as all Ages.

Euseb. God therefore commands me (when I am in England) to deny *Transubstantiation*, *Prayers for the Dead*, *Seven Sacraments*, &c. But if Business calls me to *Paris*, *Rome*, or *Madrid*; he commands me to steer about, and believe them: In *Christendom* I must believe Christ is God; but if a brisk Gale wafts me over into *Asia*, I must deny it: At *Constantinople* I must swear there is one God, and that *Mahomet* is his Prophet; but at my return into the *West*, I must change my Tune; I must swear the Prophet into an Impostor, and his Revelations into Forgery: But if I steer towards the *North*, and set up in *Lapland*; then I must bow to a *Red Cloth*; and pour forth my Orisons to *Madam Puss*: Again, if I double the *Cape*, and put in at *Cochin*; I must fall prostrate before an *Ape's Grinder*.

Ariov. Well; and what Harm in all this?

Euseb. Why truly, Travelling will be Expensive: Before we set out, we must provide our selves with *Alexander Rosse's View of Religions*; we must make a handsome Collection of *Astrolabe's Quadrants*, and *Jacob's Staffs*, to find the Lines of *Longitude* and *Latitude*; for in your Hypothesis, Mathematicks must be our Rule of Faith, and Climates the Motives of our Credibility. This is a pretty System, and has the Advantage of Novelty to recommend

commend it : I have often seen Controversies try'd by *Scripture, Tradition, and Reason* ; but to compose a Difference by *Logarithms, Sinus's, and Tangents*, is extraordinary : The Invention is worthy of your Wit, and of the same Peace with your Piety : In good time you may improve the Discovery, and find out the true Religion (as we do true Guineas) by the Weight.

But if in *England Transubstantiation* be false, it cannot be true in *France, Spain, and Italy* ; and if in *Europe* our Blessed Saviour be really God ; all the Power of the *Grand Seignior* can never turn him into a mere Man in *Asia* : In fine, if *Mahomet* be an *Impostor* in the *West*, how can he be a *Prophet* in the *East* ? For Truth is no *Trimmer*, it will not stand on both Sides of the *Contradiction*.

It's evident therefore that God commands me to believe a Falsehood, either in *England*, or beyond Sea ; nay, and engages his Authority to persuade me : He threatens Hell, if I refuse, and offers Heaven, if I conform. In *England* I honour him, by swearing *Transubstantiation* is a mere Fiction, the Product of Ignorance, and Spawn of Superstition ; but this *Tramontane* Honour carries Damnation with it at *Rome* ; here I must swear *Transubstantiation* is a very real Thing ; and so fly in the Face of my own Evidence. Perjury therefore in your Religion passes for an Act highly Meritorious, *id est*, a scandalous Crime for a most edifying Vertue. What mad Notions do you frame of God ? You level him with *Oates*, and fling him below *Bedloe* : You seem to acknowledge a Deity merely to make him capable of Contempt and Infamy.

Ariov. You mistake me ; I neither impeach God of Forgery, nor Imposture ; I do not question his Veracity, nor squint upon his Sanctity : I only maintain he commands me to be a Protestant in *England*, and a Papist at *Rome* ; to believe Christ is God in *Queen Ann's* Court, and that he is a mere Man in the *Sultan's* ; but he does not engage his Word for Truth of either Side.

Euseb. And, I suppose, he commands you to profess *Whiggism* in the *Amsterdam-Coffee-House*, *id est*, to blend Faction with Religion, and shroud Infidelity under Hypocrisy : For look you, Sir, you cannot possibly believe the Articles of the Church of *Rome* True, without pronouncing those of the Church of *England* False : For these

are *Negatives* of the other ; if God commands you to chop Beliefs with the Climate, he commands you to play the Hypocrite on one Side of the Water, which is a Crime against the first Principles of Reason, and can no more be commanded by God, than practis'd by Man : For such a Behaviour is a Burlesque ; a Satyr on all Religion ; and by consequence on the *Author* and *Object* of it.

But again, if God commands me to be a Protestant in *England*, and a Papist at *Rome* ; a Turk in *Asia*, and a Christian in *Europe*, engages his Word for a Falsity ; for the Church of *England* maintains the Articles of her Belief were Reveal'd ; the Church of *Rome* says the same, in Defence of hers ; and the *Mahometan* Congregation lays all its Impostures on Revelation : When therefore God commands you to be a Protestant, Papist, or *Muselman*, he commands you to believe he has reveal'd the particular Tenets of these Sects, and consequently avouches for the Truth of them : For whatever he reveals, must be true : So that to oblige you to believe, he has reveal'd such a Point, and to engage his Word for the Truth of it, is one and the same Thing : Now the particular Tenets of these Churches cross upon one another, and therefore all cannot possibly be true ; whence it follows, that God engages his Authority for a Lye, and pawns his Veracity for a Falsehood : You subject his Sanctity to a Weakness we all blush at, tho' we all commit it, and even level him with Knights of the Post.

Moreover, if Christ be a *mere Man*, how can God command Christians to adore him ? And if he be God, how can he forbid the *Turks*, *Nestorians*, and *Arians*, to pay him Homage due to his Divinity ? God can no more strip himself of his Sovereignty, than of his Being : He can as soon take a Creature into his Throne, as make over his Title to Adoration : In a Word, either Man can offend, or he cannot ; if he cannot, let him bid farewell to all Religions, and take leave of Morality ; let him model his Actions by *Epicure*, and his Faith by *Protagoras* : But if he can offend ; what clashes more directly with all Laws Natural and Divine, than Idolatry ? If this spiritual Incest be Innocent, what can be Criminal ; and if God can command so sacrilegious an Action, what can he forbid ?

Ariovistus

Ariovistus was pinch'd, he saw himself in the Toils, and knew not how to disingage himself; his Concern flew to his Face, and every Posture shew'd Uneasiness and Anger. Come, Sir, (said he at last to *Eusebius* with a forc'd Smile) I have mistaken my Errand, I came not to Dispute, but to be Merry; let Arguments give place to a Bottle, it's more satisfactory to see the Bottom of a Glas, than of a Question; and to drain Bumpers, than Controversies: We have run the first Heat, it's time to rub.

Euseb. You Latitudinarian Gentlemen are strange Creatures; you hector Religion and Piety with such a daring Confidence, when you are out of the reach of an Adversary, that one would swear both Sense and Reason had embrac'd your Interest: But when you receive a Blow, you retreat to Jest; you parry against Proofs with Railleries, and oppose Laughter to Reason: To be plain, you misplace your Passions, you smile when you should tremble, and laugh when you should cry: Had you any Apprehension of a God; you would dread those Flames, that his eternal Justice has prepar'd below to Burn, not to consume Blasphemies; these hideous Flights of Profaneness and Impiety would be Pain and Penance to you: You lay such desperate Commands to his Charge, as fit him rather for Contempt, than Veneration; and make him more worthy of Horror, than Adoration: For if your Divinity be Orthodox; he abets Lies, commands Idolatry, and persuades Perjury; and so Man's Vices make up the Roll of his Perfections; and we must revere in him what all human Laws punish in us.

Ariov. You are dispos'd for a touch of Polemicks: But if you are above the Laws of Decency and Breeding; I am not: I resolve not to turn Clown for Company: I have too much Respect for my Lady to be clamorous in her Presence; and think it as genteel to Duel, as to Dispute before her: Besides, we are upon Theological Niceties, unnecessary to be known by the Learned; and impossible to be understood by the Vulgar.

Sir, (said the Lady) let no Ceremony break off the Conference: We stand not here upon Grimace, or Reservedness; and though we did, your Defeat will atone for your Rudeness: To be plain; I am impatient to see your

your Vanity lash'd ; your Pride disciplin'd, and your rhodomontading Genius penanc'd with Confusion. How often in my House have you not only made a Practice, but a Boast of Profaneness, and defended the Crime, by committing a greater ? You have Lampoon'd those Gentlemen that durst stand up in defence of Religion, and daub'd them with the Reproaches of Bigotry and Superstition ; you question their Judgments, and dubb'd them Fools, who would not swallow down all Religions ; and bluster'd with imposing an Assurance, as if it were as easy to defend Libertinism, as to abet it. Sir, you are in sight of an Adversary ; look him in the Face ; stand your Ground, and defend your Principles, or condemn them by an *Affidavit*, that your Repentance may be as publick as the Scandal : Your Honour is at Stake, and there is no Means between a Victory and an Overthrow.

This sudden Tempest blown from an unexpected Quarter, soon rais'd a Tumult in *Ariovistus's* Breast ; Shame, Anger, and Revenge broke loose ; and fan'd his Resentment to such a height, that it almost stifled his Reason : He roll'd a hundred Thoughts in his Head ; and almost as many Resolutions ; yet he could not fix on any : To retaliate, was not only unmanly, but also uncivil ; for though a Lady be not below a Man's Anger, she is below his Revenge : To break off the Dispute was dishonourable ; and to baffle *Eusebius* difficult : However, at last having balanc'd his Fears with his Hopes, he concluded his Reputation would suffer less by continuing the Dispute, than flying it : For though *Eusebius* might foil him with Reason, he thought himself superior at Raillery ; which oftentimes even Men of Parts mistake for Wit, and receive for Reason. At least he had found upon Experience, that Noise in Disputes stands for Evidence, and that these carry off the Honour of Conquest in the Opinion of the Audience, who speak loudest, not who discourse best : These Considerations sway'd him to accept of a second Engagement ; wherefore turning himself first to the Lady.

Madam, (said he) I thought I ow'd your Character and Person some Respect, but seeing you are pleas'd to forego the Debt, I shall supersede the Payment ; I perceive Deference is sometimes unacceptable ; and Civility clownish. I will therefore for the future take my

Y

Liberty,

Liberty, and never stand off in Restraint or Ceremony.

Then addressing himself to *Eusebius*; Sir, continu'd he, you misunderstand me: I mean not that God commands us to conform to the Religion of the State where we live. No; he permits us only; like the Royal Eagle, he preys on Hearts; these he requires: So that if we love, honour, and obey him, we keep up to the very height of his Commands. He permits all exterior Ceremonies, though vain, superstitious, and wicked; a good Intention sanctifies an ill Action, and the Uprightness of our Hearts compounds for the Errors of our Worship: In fine, Sir, God looks on all the Failures of our Understanding as pure Mistakes, not Crimes; and those he cannot approve, he pities.

Euseb. I understood you before, and apprehend you at present: You draw the Thesis into a less Compass, and turn God's Command into a bare Permission; *id est*, I have driven you from one Retrenchment, and you are clap'd behind another; but this is no more tenable, than the first, and you will be forc'd to surrender. Tell me; does God permit all Religions?

Ariov. All that are; or ever were in the World.

Euseb. All? That Man certainly deserves Damnation, that can find no Religion to his Goust: But do no Actions outrage Nature?

Ariovistus made a Pause; and seem'd at a loss for an Answer: He saw what *Eusebius* drove at; and that he only coasted the main Question, to draw him into an Ambuscade. Sir, said he, your *Quere* is captious; and though some are of Opinion, that Vertue and Vice are rather Names than Things; yet I condescend so far, as to grant that Murders, Blasphemies, and Adulteries, flie at Nature, and are in a very obvious and literal Sense criminal and opprobrious.

Euseb. God, I suppose, permits not these unnatural Abominations; if he has no Punishments in reserve for such profligate Offenders, under-rate Transgressors may expect a Recompence.

Ariov. God disapproves such hideous Enormities, as shames Nature, and even entrench upon Breeding; they deserve Hell, and will feel it, unless Repentance appease Divine Justice.

Euseb. Why

Enseb. Why then this Permission is no more Universal; than the Command; for if God's Permission comprehends not Crimes that assail Nature; it takes not in those Religions, that insult Nature in the very act of Worship. Strike off the Catalogue, the Religion of the *Mexicans*, who to Honour their God, broke through all the Natural Laws of Justice and Honesty: For they first invaded the neighbouring Provinces with Fire and Sword; and then rip open the Breasts of twenty thousand Captives upon the sacrilegious Altars of their barbarous Divinities, and by a bloody Metamorphosis turn'd Cruelty into Piety, and worship'd God, by profaning Nature.

The Superstition of the *Peruvians* lies open to the same Exception: These savage Idolaters dy'd the Earth with the reeking Gore of human Sacrifices, and polluted their Temples with unnatural Prostitutions; they train'd up Youths for that lewd Purpose, and hallow'd their most Religious Rites with the most flaming Abominations: In a Word, Nature forbids, what their impure Gods commanded, and human Laws purge with Fire, the most essential Acts of their Religion.

If we leave *America*, and Ship for *Asia*, we shall meet with the same Vices; tho' the People are more civiliz'd, they are not less brutal. The *Thracians*, *Huns*, and *Phœnicians* worship'd their Deities, by worrying their own Species; and so built their Piety on Murders and Cruelty. In *Africa* the Superstition of the *Carthaginians* was more formidable than their Arms; and their Priests were more cruel in their Temples, than their Generals in the Field: They lock'd poor Infants in the glowing Statues of *Saturn* and plac'd their Devotion rather in the Torment, than Death of Innocents. The old *Egyptians* drown'd their Reason in Honour of *Mars*; and then prosecuted their Devotion with Clubs and Swords; and he was judg'd the most Zealous, who had the least of a Man, and most of a Butcher.

The *Babylonians* and *Phœnicians* defil'd their Temples with Whoredom and Sodomy. Prostitution always preceded Marriage; and those Women who refus'd to Shave their Heads, were doom'd to expose their Honour, and to adorn the Temple of *Venus* with the spoils of their Chastity: So that those infamous Religions branded Honesty with Infamy; they stigmatiz'd Continence, ennobled Lewdness.

I blush at the very Thought of the Rites of *Venus* the *Corinthian*, where Women were ordain'd Priests by the most scandalous and outrageous Acts of Lust; and consecrated by Adulteries: They were Strumpets before they could be qualified for Priesthood; and deserv'd *Bridewell* to be fit for the Altar. I suppose these Religions come not within the Pale of Permission: For how can God permit those Actions good Men condemn, and Debauchees blush at; that startle Nature, and confound Wickedness? He must take Notice of such Enormities, or renounce Sanctity; he must punish them, or let fall his Claim to Justice: In fine, he must maintain his Character. The Atheist who denies God, is less criminal, than he who worships him with Murders and Fornication.

Ariov. God permits not those Religions that affront Nature, and discard the first Principles of Reason: When Temples become Slaughter-houses, and Priests Butchers; when the Stews are Consecrated, and Adulteries Canoniz'd, it's time to separate from such *Congregations*.

Euseb. You found a Retreat: First God commanded to Conform to the Religion of the Country where we dwell; then you turn'd his Command into a Permission; and now you restrain this: Like the *Parthians*, you fight in your Retreat, and place your Safety in your Heels: But this Expedient will not answer Expectation: I have you in View; and will not leave the Chace, till I have either run down your Impiety, or confounded it. But, Sir, suppose a *Montezuma* should threaten Death, unless you abjur'd Christ for *Vitziliputzli*, would not God on so pressing an Occasion, permit you to embrue your Hands in human Sacrifices?

Ariov. No Man living in a noble Way fears Death less than my self: I would come into the World merely to make a handsome *Exit*: Yet I would not part with my Life for a Ceremony: My Belief is not untractable; it can bow upon Occasions, and connive at those things it does not approve: What is not Impious, is always Lawful; and therefore I would rather upon an Exigency Conform, than Die. Tho' I am sure there are *Antipodes*, I would not, like that foolish Bishop, maintain the Truth at the Expence of my Blood; this would be to trifle away Life; and is rather a Demonstration of my Folly, than of the roundness of the Earth.

Should

Should *Montezuma* command me in his Dominions to abjure Christ, I should reverence his Orders: For the Supreme Magistrate's Will, is the Law of the Subject: But whether I might in Conscience espouse his Religion, is a Case worthy of some sober Reflections: For Life is a tender Thing; Self-preservation has Charms; and the unexperienc'd Condition of Separation is a very lawful Pretext to stay in the World: To be fired or bastinadoed hence is a painful Operation, and we are not oblig'd to such a troublesome Removal.

Besides, Life (I conceive) was given us for noble Ends; and therefore we must not part with it out of a Bravado: If we disband, and leave our Colours without our great Master's Leave, we shall pay for our Desertion, and meet with a worse Welcome from an angry God in the next World, than from a barbarous Emperor in this. Seeing therefore I may give my Heart to God, whilst I offer human Sacrifices to the *Mexican* Idol; I may rather conform, than die for Disobedience: For he who forces, commits the Sin (if the Action be unlawful) not he who obeys by Compulsion.

The Company startled at this strange Divinity: Amazement tied their Tongues; and Horror run through every Joint. At last it's well (cry'd *Eusebius*) we have both Scripture to appeal to, otherways we might be puzzled by the Impudence of those, who treat *Goodness* unhandsonely by Practice, and unchristianly by defending their Excesses: Their Manners are so bad, that nothing can be worse but the Wit and Confidence they employ to excuse them. I see (continu'd *Eusebius*) you measure Man's Perfections downwards, and judge him more reasonable, the less he acts with Reason.

You are a Leveller in Morality, as well as in Religion, and make no Distinction between Vice and Vertue; or at least with an extatick Turn of the Heart, you transform one into the other: This is Direction of Intention with a Witness. A Man that can juggle the most flagitious Crimes into Piety, must be born under a very unfortunate Star to *miscarry*. You may dip your Hands in Blood, plunge your Body into the very sink of Lewdness, and with a safe Conscience make over your Soul to the Devil; an omnipotent Cast of the Heart rectifies all, a good Intention atones for a bad one.

But why did you just now exempt from the general Permission of those Religions, that in the Act of Worship affront Nature? For you may turn your Heart to God every jot as well, when your Life is secure, as when it's endanger'd; so that if Direction of Intention salves Conscience on some Occasions, it may on all: Do not Murders, Cruelties, and most unnatural Lusts turn upon Nature when my Life lies at Stake, as well as when it does not? Do they jar with Reason when I hazard Nothing, and fawn upon it when I risque All? Certainly Sins of this black Dye vary not with Circumstances, they change not their Nature as the *Cameleon* does his Colour; their Blackness lies in the Complexion, not on the Fancy; they are always the same, *id est*, odious to God, and abominable in the Sight of Men.

You say Life was given us for noble Ends, and therefore must not be flung away, either in a Pet or Bravado: It's true, but then what can Imagination frame more Noble, more Sublime; than the Defence of God's Honour, and our own Nature? Than to vindicate the just Rights and Prerogatives of Vertue from the illegal Usurpations of Vice? These Enterprizes are worthy of a Man; it's more glorious to die for such a Cause, than to conquer in the Field. When we Sacrifice our Lives for him who gave them, our Generosity will be pleaded to Advantage, not only in the next World, but also in this. No Action is truly Glorious, that is not Vertuous; and therefore your *Cesar's* and *Alexander's*, in spite of all Trophies, are Infamous in the Sight of God; their Temerity is laugh'd at by the Angels, and their Ambition severely punish'd by the Protector of Orphans, and just Avenger of Pupils: They had nothing great but Pride and Folly; their Glory sprung from Plunder, and their Renown from Slaughter; but if they deserve Praise for ransacking Cities, for overturning Kingdoms, and invading Empires, we may make Panegyricks of Plagues, raise Triumphal Arches to Famines, and erect Statues to Hurricans, or Inundations: In a Word, we live merely to serve God; this is our End; and a noble One: Passion indeed, or Discontent, are ill Diseases to die of, but then Libertinism is a dangerous Motive to live: Our Disobedience is no less Criminal, when we refuse to quit our Post upon Command, than when we abandon it without Order: We are discharg'd
of

of the Duty of Living, when we must purchase Breath at the Expence of Conscience; and certainly we forfeit Innocence, when we commit, or abett Murders or Adulteries; and by consequence, a Man must part with Life, when we cannot keep it without Treason against Nature, and Rebellion against its Author.

But, I suppose, the noble End you propose to your self, is to spin out Life, as long as the Thread will reach; to stretch Nature to it's utmost, and not to venture one single Pulse, but upon good Security of Pleasure: You had rather spend it in the Service of *Venus*, than of Vertue; rather consume by Inches, and pass through a Course of Physick, or a Sweating-Tub into the next World, than to be Well one Moment, and Dead the next: If you call this a noble End, you will be at a loss to assign an infamous one: In short, you are relaps'd into your first Error, and only defend it with a new-found Extravagance: The Amendment is ridiculous and impious into the Bargain.

Ariovistus saw he had spoke his Mind too frankly, before an Audience unacquainted with such Libertine Principles, and therefore he very nicely confess'd he had hitherto play'd the Fool. Sir, (said he to *Eusebius*) though some abett the Doctrine I have deliver'd, yet it displeases me: I cannot close with such wild Ideas of Religion, and rather propos'd 'em as a Jest than a Truth: I cannot commit a Crime to save my Skin, nor even purchase Life at the Price of Murder, or Adultery; and therefore I freely grant, that those Religions that enjoy Abominations in their *Rituals* and *Liturgies*, are out-dated, and exempted from the general Permission.

Euseb. I must own you have made a handsome Retreat; you have given a pretty turn to a monstrous Principle; but for the future, pray remember, that to Blaspheme in Jest, is to Sin in Earnest. All other Religions at least are Stanch, are they not? I put this Question to avoid Mistakes, for we have been to Day upon the Blunder.

Ariov. They are.

Euseb. Remember your Concession, for by and bye we shall discard all the idolatrous Worships of the old World, together with those of the New: The *Roman*, *Grecian*, and old *Assyrian* Polytheism, will no more pass Muster, than that of *Mexico*, *Pern*, *Jupiter*, *Apollo*,
Y 4
Mars,

Mars, Juno, and Minerva, will be kick'd out of their Temples, as well as *Vitziliputzli*. Will God be worship'd as an eternal Being, or as a Creature? As Rational, or Irrational? As infinitely Holy, or as an Adulterer, Drunkard, or Murtherer?

Ariovistus saw the Drift of this *Quare*, and was at a stand for a handsome Answer; he perceiv'd himself encompass'd on all Sides, and knew not which way to evade the Danger: To say God requires to be honour'd, as a *Being infinite Holy, infinite Wise, Eternal, and Independant*, was to give up the Cause without Dispute, and to acknowledge himself foil'd before the Combat: On the other Side, he durst not venter to affirm, God is content to be worship'd as a Creature, an Adulterer, or a Murtherer; he thought such hideous Absurdities would grate upon the Ears of his Auditors, unaccustom'd to Blasphemies, and ill dispos'd to hear them with Indignation.

The Gentleman that came with him, saw his Concern, and resolv'd to disingage his Friend from the Embarrass; wherefore (turning himself to *Eusebius*) the Answer (said he) to your *Quare*, in my Opinion is obvious: God requires that Worship which corresponds to the natural Knowledge we have of him; now Nature tells me, he is a *Being Eternal, Independant, infinitely Wise, and infinitely Holy*, therefore God commands us to adore him under this Notion.

Euseb. You have brought the Controversy to the very Point I desir'd, and have utterly defeated your Friend's System: For if God must be ador'd as *Eternal, Independant, infinitely Wise, infinitely Holy*; had I been at *Rome* in the Reign of *Jupiter, Apollo, Mercury, &c.* I could not have believed nor talked of God as the *Romans* did; much less had it been lawful in *Egypt* to adore an *Onion*, an *Ox*, a *Crocodile*, or a *Hippopotamus*; for these Creatures have no Perfection, that comes near those noble Attributes of *Eternity, and Independence*.

Saturn was *Jupiter's* Father, *Juno* his Sister; so that their Nativity must fall infinitely short of Eternity; it's of a very fresh Date, of a late Edition, and younger than Time: They had a Father, and therefore are Dependent: Their Sanctity keeps pace with their Eternity: *Jupiter* first welter'd in his Father's Blood, and then usurp'd

usurp'd his Kingdom ; so that he rather deserv'd to be flung into the *Tybur* with a Cock, and a Serpent, than to be seated in the Capitol ; and the *Gemonia* better suited with his Crimes, than an Altar. *Juno* was a *Miss*, even to her Brother ; and as infamous for Scolding, as her Incest : She deserv'd at least a House of Correction for the first Crime, and a Ducking-stool for the Second. *Mercury* was a *Jack of all Trades* ; sometimes he play'd the *Piper*, sometimes the *Sharper* : he turn'd *Post-Boy* upon Occasions, and then *Cut-Purse* : And to shew the World he could stoop to the basest Crimes, as well as the meanest Employments, he sets up for a *Pimp*, a *Pander*, and *Procurer*. *Apollo* may be said better than his Father, only because he was not quite so bad : His Amours were without Number, as they were without Shame : The Heathen *Theology* seems to have drawn in this Person the Picture of a perfect *Bean* ; for it allow'd him some Wit, more Beauty, a World of Impudence, but no Conscience. These were *Divinities* of the first *Class* ; *majorum Gentium* ; Gods of Quality and Figure ; in fine, of the *Upper House* : And yet Partiality it self, would not have cleared them at any Bar : I except the Right of *Ignoramus Juris*, when Crimes found Mercy, and *Innocence* Halters. The *Egyptian* Deities *Osiris* and *Anubis* were of the same Stamp ; there were neither better, nor more Ancient, than those of *Rome* and *Greece*.

Now, Sir, if God commands us to worship him as an eternal and independent Being ; we cannot clap in with a *Roman*, *Grecian*, or *Egyptian* Congregation ; nay, nor with any Idolatrous one, that is, or ever was in the World : For they tell us, God is a *Man*, a *Woman*, a *Snake*, a *Tree*, a *Crocodile*, and a *Red-Cloth* : But it's evident these poor Creatures can claim no Right to Eternity, much less to Independence ; therefore had I liv'd in these blind Ages, when Serpents crawl'd upon Altars, and Monsters invaded Temples, I could not prostrate my self before them ; I must have protested against the Impiety, and rather have fallen by the Magistrates Hand, than have paid Obedience to his Law.

Again, God will be worship'd as infinitely Holy : How then can you fall prostrate before an incestuous *Jupiter*, a thieving *Mercury*, a bloody *Mars*, a peevish *Juno*, or a prostitute *Venus* ? Such Crimes entertain no Commerce with

with Sanctity; their place is Hell, not Heaven; and the Criminals rather deserve Infamy and Tortures, than Adoration. Does he adore God as infinitely *Holy*, who acknowledges him guilty of Incest, Murther, Felony, and even of those Offences that fright and startle Nature? That put to the Blush, not only the Modesty of the Innocent, but also the very Impudence of the Guilty? In fine, that infect *Hell*, and plague the Damned?

Moreover, God requires to be honour'd as a *Being infinitely Wise*; by what Rule therefore can you, with those of *Coromandel* say and believe he is an *Ape*? With the *Romans*, *Grecians*, and all the other idolatrous People of the World, he is a *Man*, a *Statue*? Or with the superstitious *Egyptian*; he is an *Onyon*, a *Wolf*, a *Crocodile*? Some of these fantastical Deities are even void of Sense, much more of Reason; and the Men-Divinities have left Posterity no other Marks they had Reason, but their Crimes: We know they had some Wit, by the enormous Abuses of it; their Wisdom had a small Reach, it went no farther, than to lay Snares for fond Boys, or for simple Girls: Seeing therefore all the idolatrous Worship that ever was in the World, since the Birth of *Polytheism* to this very Moment, clashes with those Notions under which God will be adored, you can no more join with any idolatrous Congregation, than with its Crimes. It remains therefore, that God's Permission is no more Universal, than his Command; and though at first you were pleas'd to extend it to all Religions except two or three, you must now turn the Tables, and exclude all but two or three. So that to conclude, that great Principle, *We must conform to the Religions of those Countries where we live*, is not only notoriously False, but also scandalous to Extravagance.

Ariov. You fancy I am run a-ground, and that you have wounded my Principles beyond Recovery: But stay; you have been upon the Ramble, and mistaken your Way: You reason upon a false Bottom; for you suppose Heathens worship'd Creatures, and paid Homage to Statues; whereas most certainly they ador'd the true God under those sensible Resemblances; nor can you reasonably presume they worship'd *Men*, *Statues*, or *Beasts*, unless you suppose them Fools, to make them impious. I might

might then with a safe Conscience adore *Jupiter*, *Apollo*, and *Venus* at *Rome*; and would now (were I in the *Indies*) bend before *Ram*, or in *Japan* before *Zacas*: For these visible Objects are but dark Emblems, or different Names of *God* blessed for evermore. Tho' therefore *God* commands me to adore him, as *Eternal*, *Independant*, infinitely *Holy*, and infinitely *Wise*; he has not determin'd under what Name: Tho' we call him *Jupiter*, *Mars*, or *Apollo*, he scorns to formalize: If *Ram*, *Zacas*, or *Amidas*, he will not Pet: A great Name adds not a grain to his Perfections, nor can a vulgar Appellation diminish them. In fine, Reason teaches us his Nature, but his Name we learn from Custom; and this will vary till you bring all Languages to their primitive Unity: So that, methinks, you have all this while skirmish'd with a Shadow, or fenc'd with a *Nothing*: You have rais'd a sottish Idolatry in your Brain, merely to destroy it: But great Wits often mistake the Question, as well as great Block-heads: Like ill-bred Spaniels, they run at Check on a false Scent; flush their own Fancies for their Adversaries Opinion; and cry *Victory*, when they have handsomely lash'd their own Errors.

Euseb. Because just now I put you in Mind of some Mistakes, and censured severely a Vein of Shuffling that runs through all your Discourse, you very fairly cruise for Reprisals, and would fain bring me in *Guilty* of the same over-sight, I have legally prov'd upon you: Believe me, Sir, I have not caper'd in the Air. I aim'd at your *Principle*, and have hit it; and you are sensible enough I am come up to the very Point in Debate; and so start a new Question, either to entangle me, or to delude the Audience. But I intend not to wade far in this Controversy, *Whether the Pagans adored the true God under the Shape of Jupiter, Apollo, &c.* Doctor *Stillin.* maintain'd they did, but all impartial Men wish'd he had employ'd his Talents on a more defensible Subject; for certainly his Reputation suffer'd in the Enterprize, and he had shew'd more Judgment in stepping over so nice a Point, than he did Wit, in treating it so little to the Purpose.

However, because you have flung this Difficulty in my Way, I must take some Notice of it; not that the Issue of our present Dispute depends on the Decision of this Question; but because I am resolv'd to give you full

Satis.

Satisfaction. I say then; *That the Heathens did not adore the true God, under the Names of Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, &c.* and this is so manifest a Truth, that a Man must shut his Eyes to overlook it: *Dii non fuerunt ab eterno, sed ita eorum quisquis natus est ut nos nascimur.* Your Gods (says *Athenagoras* to the Gentiles) are not Eternal, they were all Born, as we are: And *Min. Felix* laughs at the Pagans for adoring those as Gods, who were born and died like Men: *Manifestum est homines illos fuisse, quos & natos legimus, & mortuos scimus.* *St. Cyprian de Idol. Van.* proves they were not Gods, because they had been Kings. *Deos non esse, quos colit Vulgus hinc notum est: Reges enim fuerunt:* And when some Gentiles (to delude those Christian Arguments they could not answer) had the Impudence to deny they worship'd any Man. *Arnobius* confutes their wretched Evasion, and proves home upon them, they really adored Men, though they blushed to own the Folly, *lib. 11. cont. Gent. Vos hominem nullum colitis? Non unum vel alium? Non innumeros alios? Quin imo non omnes, quos in Templis vestris mortalium sustulistis ex numero, & cælo sideribusque donastis? Et infra jam profecto discetis quibus singuli patribus, quibus matribus fuerint procreati; qua in regione nati, qua gente, quæ fecerint, egerint, pertulerint.* But to put an end to the Controversy, take a Turn to the Capitol, and you will see what Opinion the Pagans had of *Jupiter*, *Qui ejus nutricem in Capitolio posuerunt;* who placed his very Nurse, Wife, Sister, and Daughter in this august Temple. I might here bring a Cloud of Witnesses, who liv'd and convers'd with Heathens, who studied their profane Theology to confute it; who were Men of Learning and Probity, and never calumniated an Adversary to oppress him: But what I have said suffices to convince a rational Man, that the Pagans adored Creatures, not the Creator, under borrow'd Names as you pretend.

Ariov. Indeed the Vulgar might possibly mistake the Fables of *Homer* for Articles of Religion, and model their Faith by Ballads: They might divide God into Sex, and worship Men and Women before Statues their Representatives; but you must grant this gross Impiety concern'd only the Rabble; the Philosophers and leading Men were above such an Absurdity,

Euseb. No doubt the Philosophers condemn'd in their Hearts those very Deities they ador'd; but their Practice varied from their Judgment, and tho' they were Theists in the Schools, they were Polytheists in the Temples. God was not worship'd according to the Ideas of Philosophers, but of Poets. *Quid sibi vult ista non poetica sed inimica plane Varietas, Deos secundum Philosophos in libris querere, secundum poetas in templis adorare. Aug. lib. 2. de Consen. Evan. Cap. 23.* And if you doubt of this, I must desire you once more in St. *Austin's* Name to enter into the *Capitol*; this was the Seat of *Jupiter*; *O. M. id est*, of *Rome's* supream God. Here you will find *Amalthæa* a Goat, who nurs'd this Deity; his Sister, Wife, and Daughter; evident Arguments, the *Romans* thought he was a Man to whom they paid supream Honour: For if they thought he was Eternal, why gave they him a Nurse? If independent, why did they confess he ow'd his Preservation to Goats Milk? And then: If he were not a Man, what did he with a Wife? Or how came he by a Daughter? Do not tell me, these are poetical Inventions; I know they are: But these Fables were expos'd by the Heathen Divines, and cull'd out of *Poems* to piece up Religion; they were absurd, it's true, yet believ'd by some, and reverenc'd by all. In fine, if Poets invented them, the Priests adopted 'em; they were convey'd from the Stage to the Temple by Blindness and Superstition, and what Men laugh'd at in one place, they adored in the other. *Nunquid & Capirolia Romanorum opera sunt Poetarum? August. Lib. 6. de Civ. Dei.*

But if we suppose against Scripture, against the Authority of Pagans themselves, and the concurrent Testimonies of Ages, that the Heathens did adore the supream God *blest for Evermore*; this will not better your Cause, nor prejudice mine: For still, it's as clear as plain Fact can make a Thing, that when they worship'd him under the Shape of *Jupiter*, they clap'd upon his infinite Sanctity *Rapes* and *Adulteries*: They impeach'd him of Robberies under the Notion of *Mercury*, of Cruelty under that of *Mars*, &c. Nay, they strip'd him of all Wisdom under the Figures of Beasts, and even of Sense under those of *Onions*, *Fire*, and *Water*. If therefore we are oblig'd to adore God as a *Being Eternal, Independent, infinitely Holy, and infinitely Wise*; you could not believe,

nor

nor worship God, as the old Heathens did, nor can you go over to any Pagan Society that now is, either in the *East* or *West Indies*: For though they do worship the true and invisible God, under visible and material Images, yet they charge him with a thousand Impertinencies, destructive to those Notions under which he commands Worship. So that we must reform your *Thesis*, and dash out of the universal Permission, not only two or three, but two or three thousand Religions establish'd in the World by Custom, and maintain'd by all the Supports of Force and Authority: For they outrage Nature, and burlesque God's most sacred Attributes; they rifle his Majesty, entrench upon his Wisdom, asperse his Sanctity, and turn his very Being into Farce and Raillery.

Ariovistus was at a *Nonplus*, and his Concern flew to his Face: Nay, his usual Confidence withdrew, and even Raillery the last Defence of Libertines deserted him; so that he made a Figure worthy of Laughter and Compassion: At last he resolv'd to gain Time for Reflection, and therefore addressing himself to the Lady; Madam, (said he) I have almost talk'd my self out of Breath, an Hours respite will not be unseasonable; with your leave, we will put off the Conclusion till the Evening.

Upon Condition (answer'd the Lady) you'll return to the Conference, or condemn your Principles.

Ariov. I'll be bound for my Appearance, or if you ask better Security, my Friend, I presume, will give in Bail for my forth-coming: Then turning himself to *Eusebius*; we are (continu'd he) in the Pit, and must fight it out: There is no place left for Retreat. Leaving the Company, he walk'd into the Garden, rather to conceal his *Chagrin*, than to take the Air: And indeed I wonder not at his Concern; for it's observ'd, that though Libertines hate Conscience, they are fond of Honour; they are Creatures made up of Pride and Arrogance, and therefore neither know how to bear an Advantage with Moderation, nor a Disappointment with Patience.

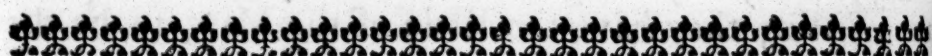
When he was gone: I am surpriz'd (said the Lady) at the Gentleman's Confidence; surely his Assurance weighs more than his Judgment; why else will he bring his Cause to another Hearing? I love not to laugh at another Man's Misfortune, nor to draw Pleasure from his

Confusion: But, methinks, I cannot be sorry to see Irreligion punish'd in its grand Protector: Humiliations work more on a Libertine's Understanding, than Demonstration; and those that cannot be argu'd out of loose Principles, are sometimes sham'd out of them.

Were the Vertue of *Ariovistus* equal to his Wit (said his Friend) nothing could be more accomplish'd than he; but I must own, his Morals are bad, and his Principles worse: He laughs at the difference between Good and Evil: And I have heard him say, *No Sin is blacker, than the very thinking there is any: Nay; he defines Sin, a thing that some live by inveighing against, and others by practising.* And hence it is, that he, not only makes a Practice, but a boast of Sin, and defends it with as much Greediness as he commits it.

Enseb. But, Sir, though such Men carry off the Reputation of Wit, they have too little of the Man, to be the Standard of Mankind: We are not (God be thank'd) Fools enough to take Scoffs for Arguments, nor Raillery for Reason: He is a great *Ignoramus*, who knows not that it's easier to sport with Vertue, than to practice it; indeed, if *Ariovistus* could jest Sin into *Nothing*, his Mirth would not be unreasonable: But the wild Humour of a Debauchee, cannot work upon the Nature of things: Wit may dive into Essences, but not transmute them. However, I hope to reason the Gentleman out of Conceit both of his Wit and Religion, and to persuade him that those are Fools who sport themselves into Hell; and that none more certainly do so, than those who make a Jest of Sin, and a *Pageant* of Religion: For tho' a Man who dares defy God, and look Damnation in the Face, may be Witty, I am sure he is superlatively Foolish. *Endoxus* was no less mortify'd than *Ariovistus*. He was not indeed concern'd at his Disgrace; no, he rather felt Symptoms of Indignation than of Pity; and wish'd he had defended his *Post* with greater Bravery, or render'd it with more Ignominy: For having been deluded by *Ariovistus*, he thought the Weakness of his Defence would glance upon his own Reputation, and that the World would tax him of Levity, or Simplicity, for embracing Latitudinarianism upon so weak Grounds. One would swear, said he in a Passion, these Men by their Talk had engross'd all the Wit of the Nation; as well
as

as the Vices; yet bring them to the Touchstone, and you'll find nothing but Dross; they argue as ill as they believe, and are as great Strangers to Reason, as to Vertue; they dispute no more methodically than they live, and are as weak in Principle, as violent in Passion. *Endoxus* was going on, when Dinner put an end to his Invective. *Ariovistus* had not walk'd away his Resentment, he brought it to Table, and even discover'd it by endeavouring to conceal it: He run up Pleasantry to Affectation, and made himself ridiculous, not to appear in a Passion: So that the Lady told him with a Smile, *He was merry out of Vexation*; but *Ariovistus* let the Complement fall, thinking it the best way, to connive at a petty Affront he durst not Revenge; and so they enter'd upon a Conversation of indifferent Subjects.



DIALOGUE XII.

ARIOVISTUS is forc'd to confess, that one only Religion is Saving.

THE Lady invited the Company into the Garden after Dinner: She was impatient to see the Issue of the Dispute, which she hop'd would prove disadvantageous to *Ariovistus*: Nay, the morning Success had not only allay'd her Fears, but even given her an Assurance, that Truth would triumph over Falsity, and Religion over Impiety; besides, she flatter'd herself, her Son would profit by *Ariovistus's* Misfortune, and desert those Tenets his Master was not able to defend; for he was dissatisfied with the Morning's Performance, and the Abilities of *Ariovistus* came not up to his Expectation: He saw him always upon the Retreat, and that he rather shuffled than argued; he scarce durst look an Argument in the Face; and though he sometimes fenc'd off Blows, he never gave any: In fine, he turn'd short upon himself, and generally confuted one Reply by the contrariety of the other; so that *Endoxus* suspected the Cause of *Ariovistus* was no better than the Defence of it, and that he pleaded it, because it was destitute of Reason.

After a Turn or two in the Garden, the Lady leading the Company into an *Arbor*, methinks, said she to *Ariovistus*, this Place was made for Conversation; we have both Time and Convenience to give a second Hearing: You are I am sure a Gentleman of your Word.

Ariov. Madam, I desire nothing more: Let us then, continu'd he, turning himself to *Eusebius*, begin where we broke off this Morning. Be pleas'd, Sir, to remember, I cast before you a Scheme of those Religions that are *A-la-mode* among our young Town-Sparks. Some are so amazingly irreligious, as to turn Religion into a Trick of State; they say it's a Slave to Government, and cannot oblige till it passes into Law, but then it's binding, though never so execrable.

Others retrench from this Command, those Religions that welter in Blood, and flame with Prostitution: Such Religions, they say, are fram'd for *Cyclops*, and calculated for *Sodom* and *Gomorrha*: A Man must turn a Lyon, or Baboon, to practise the Duties of such Churches, and a Devil to command 'em: Wherefore they stigmatize the Believers of such scandalous Tenets, and throw both the *Crendenda* and *Agenda* out of the Pale of God's permission: But then, a few excepted, all others, they say, are allow'd of; a good Intention rectifies their Errors, and even compounds for Idolatry its self; it persuades God to wink at Impiety, and to take Affront for generation. This is, no doubt, to trespass upon his Goodness, to make bold with his Greatness, and to treat his Majesty with Scorn and Contempt.

The Company smil'd, and admir'd no less the Gentleman's Confidence, than the Contrivance; by this little artifice he very handsomely heav'd the Shame of the Deceit from himself to those young Sparks, whose *Persuasive* he pretended to defend: But the Imposture lay too open to trapan the Company, for he disputed not as *Second*, but as *Principal*; and pleaded his own Cause, not theirs: But those Men are above the Niceties of Honour, Punctilio's of Conscience.

Eusebius knew not well how to model his Countenance, he was both tempted to laugh, and to frown; for the Gentleman was witty, tho' impudent. At last; Sir, said he to *Ariovistus*, I thought you had undertaken the Defence of

your own Religion, not of *John an Oaks*; I love not to encounter *Representatives*, nor to engage with *Corporations* by proxy. However, I am glad you have chang'd Sides, and left the *Post* of an *Advocate* for that of an *Accuser*; we have at last made some Progress: For now it's agreed on, that in spite of Mr. *Hobbs* and his *Profelytes*, the Laws of Common-wealth must not be the Standard of our Faith; that God permits not (much less commands us) to convene with those Congregations in Religion, that countenances Impieties; in fine, that Idolatry invades God's Right, strikes at his Prerogative, and draws upon his very Person: So that in Conclusion, those Religions that are permitted take up but little Room, and may be cast up without the help of *Arithmetick*: Now, Sir, favour us with a Draught of your Tenets.

Ariov. With all my Heart, I neither blush to acknowledge my Religion, nor fear to defend it: It's upright in its Principles, and reasonable in the Application: It's fitted for all Capacities: The Peasant comprehends it, and the Philosopher admires it: In a word, my Religion is, what Men call *Natural*: It's of the same Date with our Nature, and came into the World with *Adam*: God printed every Article of it in our Hearts, before the Invention of the *Press*, and it's propagated by Generation: We carry our Gospel and Prophecies within us, which can neither be corrupted by Malice, Ignorance, or Indavertency. Our *Creed* is plain, and our *Decalogue* short, but comprehensive. We believe a God, *Maker of Heaven and Earth*; a God that punishes Vice, and rewards Vertue; he requires no Sacrifice, but of our Hearts, no Respect, but of his Grandeur, and Obedience to his Commands; nor does his Law put any Precept upon us but this, *Do as you would be done by*.

This Religion is Universal: It's neither confin'd to Time, nor Place: It takes in all Ages, and runs thro' all Climates: It obliges the most incult Nations of the World, together with the most Polite; and because all know its Precepts, no Man is exempted from their Obedience: Yet it permits those Rites and Ceremonies, tho' vain and superstitious, which clash not with the above-mentioned Tenets: But the very Moment a Religion coins an Article, opposite to the Belief of a God, or contrary to the Attributes of his Sanctity, Wisdom, Justice, or Mercy, when

when it refuses to this all-powerful Being an Acknowledgment of Dependence, and withal reverses this great Law of Nature, *Quod tibi non vis fieri, alteri ne feceris*; I say, the Moment a Religion falls into such bare-fac'd Impieties, it becomes Sacrilegious and Abominable: And for this reason, I extend God's Permission to three only Religions, the *Christian*, *Jewish*, and *Mahometan*; for these alone stand upon the Law of Nature; they instil most excellent Principles, and regulate our Duty to God, and our Obligation to Men.

Euseb. Do you speak your own Thoughts? I put the Question for a Caution against Mistakes, for we have play'd away the Morning at *cross Questions*.

Ariov. It's my Opinion, and will stand the most severe Test of Reason; nothing material can possibly be brought against it.

Euseb. For all that, I hope to banish two of the three Religions out of the Permission; nay, and force you to confess there are no more Religions than God's. A Man, you say, may commence a Jew, when he has taken the Pet at Christianity, and change Baptism for Circumcision; and when he has taken a Surfeit of the *Talmud*, he may piously strike off to *Mecha*, and truck the *Pentateuch* for the *Alcoran*.

Ariov. He may.

Euseb. With a safe Conscience, therefore in *England* we may believe *Christ* is the true *Messias*, born of a Virgin, true God, and true Man; who dy'd for our Sins, and was butcher'd by our Malice: But when we have given up our Names to a Rabbin, and are adopted into one of the Tribes, we may change Language, and as safely protest the *Messias* is yet to come; that *Christ* is a mere Man, nothing different from others, but that he was more Criminal; that he dy'd for his own Offences, not for ours; that Justice took him off, not Envy: We may believe these Tenets, and swear to the Truth of every Title. The *Christian* engages God's Authority for the Truth of his *Creed*, the *Jew* takes the same Liberty; yet one Side jars with the other. Here is a down-right Contradiction, nor can all the Artifice of Logick, all the Power of the Almighty reconcile both Sides. If the *Christian* be in the Right, the *Jew* is in the Wrong; and if Truth stands for the *Jew*, it must of Necessity abandon the *Christian*.

Arior. You have Reason, but because I know not which side Truth favours, I may join with either.

Enseb. Supposing your Pretensions grounded, you cannot take both Sides: For tho' you are ignorant with which Party Truth sides, you are sure it can't stand for both; so that tho' in your Hypothesis you may either be Jew or Christian, you can't be both successively. If you swear to the Christian Symbol to day, and to the Jewish to morrow, you are perjur'd beyond all peradventure; for you know the Tenets of these two Churches don't nick like *Tallies*.

But this is not all (continu'd *Ensebins*) if God permits me to take up with the Brethren of the Circumcision, he permits me to refuse Worship to *Jesus Christ*; nay, to blaspheme him. If I may turn off to the Christians, he permits me to adore him. Now either he is God, or he is not: If the Second, I must not adore him, for tho' God be Master of his Favours, he is not of his Honour; he can't make this over to any Creature by a Deed of Gift, or Conveyance; tho' he be Eternal, like a *Minor* he can't alienate the Title: But again, if Christ be God, certainly he requires Adoration as an indispensable Duty, and if we fail to discharge our selves of the Obligation, God will not fail to punish our Neglect.

Moreover, God can't, you say, permit these Offences that Nature condemns: His prerogative-Royal reaches not so far. Now what can intrench more upon Nature, than to invest a Creature with the Title to a Worship which God alone can claim a Right to? Than to withdraw my Allegiance from the Creator of all Things, and bow to my Fellow-Creature? Yet God permits Christianity on the one Side, and on the other it's flat Idolatry to adore Christ, if he be only Man; therefore if Christ be only Man, God permits Idolatry, *id est*, a Sin of the highest Malice against the very first Principle of Nature: It's then as evident that one of these Religions is forbid, as that one is mere Practice and Imposture, and it's as manifest, that one is Practice and Imposture, as that both Members of a Contradiction can't possibly be true.

Arior. Were I sure that Christ was God, I should lie under an indispensable Obligation of adoring him; I must then adhere to Christianity; and if Occasion requir'd, sign my Faith with my Blood: And were I sure

he

he was Man alone, I ought to wheel off from the Church to a *Synagogue*, and exchange the *Gospel* for the *Talmud*: But I am in the Dark, I rove in Obscurity, and cannot determine for which Religion Truth stands. In this Uncertainty God permits me to clap in with either; my Ignorance justifies his Permission, and my Choice; and though by refusing to adore Christ, I may not do him Right, Ignorance hinders me from doing him Wrong. Thus tho' the Jews deprive him of his Due, if he be God; and the Christians give more than his Due, if he be not; yet their Sin can be only *Material*, that is, without Malice, and consequently without Offence; seeing neither Religion is impious in its Worship, and both excellent in their Precepts of Morality, it's clear we may follow either.

Euseb. Never did Men talk more of Religion than we, and never had Men less. To level Judaism with Christianity, even in a Christian, nay a reform'd Kingdom, is one of the most monstrous Attempts that ever I heard of: The very Thought of so bold a Blasphemy almost casts me into an *Agony*, and makes me sweat with Disgust: This is to raise a *Cross* for our blessed Redeemer in *Christendom*, as the Jews did in *Jerusalem*, to play upon his Goodness, to revile his Greatness, and to salute him with a *Crucifige*. But what will not Men do to support a dying Cause, who have nothing left, but *Will* and *Forehead*? Your Religion, Sir, is not calculated up for 1700, but for 1642, or thereabouts, when the *Ten Commandments* were only Authentick during *Pleasure*, when the four *Evangelists* were upon their *Behaviour*, with a *quandiu se bene gesserint*, and a *nemine contradicente*, not the Bible, govern'd the Pulpit: In fine, your very Defence of Religion strikes at Religion, and whilst you approve either, you fairly condemn both; for you pretend both the Jewish and Christian Religion are permitted, because you doubt of both, and know not on which side Truth stands. Now supposing you are in such Circumstances, it's evident you can't in Conscience embrace either; for which Side soever you take, you fear you are in the Wrong: Now whosoever squares his Actions by a dubious Dictamen of Conscience, is certainly guilty of a *formal Sin*, tho' otherwise the Objects are not only *lawful*, but *laudable*. This is an unquestionable Principle in

Morals, and can only be deny'd by those who make no Difference between *Good* and *Evil*. If therefore you adore Christ with the Christian, and at the same time doubt of his Divinity, you offend God in the very Act of Worship: You are a kind of a Pagan, tho' no Idolater. On the other Side, if you blaspheme him with the Jew, if you strip him of his Divine Nature, if you herd him with the accursed Crew of Hypocrites, and Impostors, and at the same time suspect he is more than a Man, tho' the Doubt may perchance diminish the Sin, it cannot possibly excuse it.

Ariov. This is pretty. Must I then like old *Erasmus* dangle in the Air between both Churches? Or if I doubt of all Religions, must I profess none? Certainly, Sir, you mistake your Errand: Whilst you pull down Latitudinarianism, you very fairly set up Atheism; and lest all Religions should be Saving, you disallow of all. I would set out at *Jordan*, and take my Progress from one Religion to another, I would let any Man write upon me *Turk, Jew, Anabaptist, Presbyterian, Independent*, or what Persuasion you please, rather than an *Atheist*. In fine, it's more Orthodox to profess any Religion than none.

Enseb. Under Favour, I would no more persuade you to condemn all Religions than to approve all. I know there is a true Religion, and I am sure there is but one. Nay, I am confident, that the Christian Religion carries so many visible Marks of divine Revelation about it, that a Man, who will bring Things to a sober Examen, must confess it came from Heaven, and that he who turns Christianity into a Fable, or the Doctrine of the Bible into Illusion, deserves either to be begg'd for a Fool, or to be stigmatiz'd for a Blasphemer. But if you waver with Doubts, and fluctuate between the *Synagogue* and the *Church*, without being able certainly to determine in which Truth is preach'd, in which Imposture; rouse up your Reason, bring both to the Bar, hear their Pretensions, examine the Motives of Credibility, and in fine sum up the Evidence; and if you do this impartially, you'll soon either be a Madman, or a Christian.

Ariov. But if after I have heard the Witnesses, and weigh'd the Evidence on both Sides with Deliberation, Maturity, and Impartiality; if, I say, after these ceremonial Preliminaries, I remain ambiguous, must I neither convene with the Jew, nor the Christian? *Enseb.*

Euseb. With neither, if this strange Case should happen: I say, *should happen*, for in Reality it cannot; the Motives of Christianity are so many, and so convincing, that unless we shut our Eyes, and hood-wink Reason, they'll force us to acknowledge, that if it be not evidently true, it's at least evidently credible; and when once you are come up to this certainty, then you are oblig'd to declare for Christianity, to believe its Tenets, and practise its Morals.

Ariov. Tho' Christianity compar'd with Judaism may seem credible, perchance it may seem incredible, if compar'd with some other Religion, that has never appear'd on our Horizon: For as there are *Terre Incognite*, unknown Regions, so there are undiscovered Religions. Must I therefore take my leave of Old England, trudge to Sea, and encompass the World with Sir Francis Drake, before I pitch upon a Religion? or must I at least rig out a Vessel of Intelligence; and then work upon those Materials the Captain or Mate bring home? This is a Work both tedious and expensive; nay, I may add, endless and foolish; and he that can persuade himself God requires such a puzzling and so impossible a Scrutiny, must confess the wise Maker of all Things, intended rather to be laugh'd at by Men, than worship'd.

Euseb. Keep at home; God neither commands you to ship for *Africa*, or *America*, nor to run in quest after the Fables of the *Brachmans*, or the Superstitions of the *Bonzies*. A Religion that is evidently credible in England, is so all the World over, with what Sect soever you compare it: For neither God's Goodness, nor Wisdom can permit, that a false Religion should be equally credible with the true one; much less can he permit it to be more credible, and least of all, to be evidently credible: If therefore, after a sober Examen, you find such an Appearance of Truth in the Christian Religion, that you cannot doubt of it without Imprudence and Rashness, you may conclude, without comparing it with any other, that you are obliged to adhere to it, as revealed by God; and if you refuse to believe his supreme Veracity, (when you cannot without a high Imprudence doubt, but he speaks) you must expect to pay for the Contempt, by groaning eternally under the Weight of his Indignation.

Dash therefore out of the *Patent*, one of these two Religions, and I counsel you (out of Respect to the Baptism you have receiv'd, and the Kingdom you live in) rather to give up Judaism than Christianity; and after all, Sir, Circumcision is painful, and our *English* Constitutions will not bear the Operation.

Ariov. Take your Course; we have been upon Duty a great while, and I am willing to come to an Agreement upon any Terms.

Euseb. To an End, you mean, of the Dispute; for we can no more agree than Light and Darkness, than Truth and Falshood, than Libertinism and Religion. The present Question is, Whether a Man may in Conscience conform to the *Alcoran* in *Constantinople*, and to the Gospel in *Christendom*? Pray what Opinion have you of the *Alcoran*? Was it compil'd by divine Inspiration, or Imposture? by a Prophet, or a Cheat? By the Impulse of the Holy Ghost, or the Suggestion of Lewdness and Ambition?

Ariov. Every Tittle breaths Nonsense, Impiety, or Blasphemy: It puts almost the very Alphabet out of Countenance, and infects the Paper it's writ on. A Man must commence *Fool*, before he can impose upon his Reason those Forgeries for Revelations; and turn Beast to practise the Morals.

Euseb. Enough: Why so much Heat? So much Inveective against a Religion that comes within the Verge of Permission? If tolerated, it deserves Respect; if not, why do you defend it? It's ridiculous to damn the *Alcoran*, and canonize the Doctrine; to censure *Mahomet*, and approve Mahometism.

But, pray, Sir, if the *Alcoran* favours Lewdness, and lets loose Sensuality; if it draws upon Modesty, and tilts at Reason; if it gorges with Impiety, and smells of Blasphemy; how can you put on the Turban, and herd with the Musselmen? For when you jump over the Pale of Christianity, and give up your Name to the *Cady*, or *Musty*, you must take up for Truths these Fables, you now brand with Forgery and Imposture; you must change the Key to another Tune; you must revere at *Constantinople* what you laugh at in *London*, and bow to what you ridicule; you must say and believe, Untruths is the Language of Heaven, Blasphemy the dictates of

the *Holy Ghost*, Murthers, Lewdness, and Rapines, the Commands of a meek, holy, and just Deity; for the *Turks* take all the *Alcoran* for Revelation and Precept. Now to say God has reveal'd some Things that clash with Truth, others that check Reason, and others again that overshoot Extravagance; that he commands some Things that discountenance Vertue, and encourage Libertinism; is to strike at all his Attributes, and to make at his very Person; it's to frame a more vile Idea of his Divinity, than the very *Laplander*: For theirs is only Ridiculous, whilst yours is Sacrilegious and Execrable.

Ariov. Were I at *Constantinople*, I would speak like the Musty, and do like a Musselman, but then in my Closet I would laugh at their Folly, and pity their Blindness; though my Tongue conform'd to the establish'd Religion, my Heart shou'd be a *Recusant*: This should adore God in Spirit and Truth, tho' my Tongue and outward Man worship'd him with Blasphemies, and serv'd him in Sensuality: All Exterior Actions are to be rated by the Interior, this is their proper Standard; if the Intention be Sterling, they cannot possibly be Counterfeit.

Enseb. Ho! We are just were we set out: Now all Religions are permitted again.

Ariov. Why so?

Enseb. If the Intention can sanctifie *Hypocrisie*, and the most outrageous Blasphemies, why may it not convey Piety into Murthers? and Holiness into the impure *Sabbaths* of *Venus* and *Priapus*? Why can't it blanch over the Horror of the *Mexicans* human Sacrifices? Or the Cruelty of the *Punick* burning Statutes of *Saturn*? You may, you say, at *Constantinople* expose Christianity to the Scorn and Petulancy of Infidels; give up the *Bible* to *Turks* and Barbarians; impeach Christians of Apostacy, and make Impudence and Inspiration speak the same Language. If a good Intention can justify at *Constantinople* such a Catalogue of black Impieties, why may it not authorize less Crimes in other places? Return boldly to your first *Thesis*; exclude no Religion out of the Act of Indulgence; place Vertue and Vice on the same Level; pull down the Boundaries between Good and Evil; take off the Restraint of Conscience, and blend Men and Beasts into one *Species*. Come, Sir, pluck up a good Heart;

Heart; cast the *Die*, and pass the *Rubicon* of Honour and Conscience, our Dispute will otherwise be at an end; for we have cast out the *Talmud* as Apocryphal; you have discarded the Alcoran; so that the Gospel only stands untouch'd, and God's Permission is confin'd to Christianity alone.

Ariovistus found himself in the Toyl, and knew not which way to unhamper himself; his concern flew to his Face, and every Posture betray'd an extreme Passion; he seem'd to brood some desperate Resolution, and only wanted Boldness to execute it: After a short Strife between Shame and Revenge; I perceive, said he to *Eusebius*, you take Advantage of my Condescension, and even turn my Civility against me; you manage a Favour so ungenteelly, that I shall stand off in Caution and Reservedness for the future.

Euseb. Explain your Meaning. I suppose in Disputes, Reason must take place of Ceremony, and that a Man may press an Argument home without trespassing upon good Breeding: To be plain, I am more beholden to my Arguments, than to your Liberality; you have condescended to me, as *Boufflers* did to K. *William*, when he could hold out no longer: In a Word, I have not courted, but storm'd you into those Concessions you blush at.

Ariov. Hold there; I laid the Alcoran at your Mercy without Necessity, and attack'd it of Imposture, Fallacy, and Blasphemy, out of an Excess of good Nature and Complaisance.

Euseb. Out of good Nature and Complaisance?

Ariov. Yes; for among Friends, it carries an Air of Truth, and the unlimited Extent of that Persuasion pleads home for the Divinity of its Author.

Euseb. Ho! ho! we have Turks in *England*: I thought the Ottoman Religion reach'd no further than the Ottoman Sword; but I perceive it has swum over into our Island. Pray, continu'd he, with a Smile, what is your Turkish Appellation? *Solyman*? or *Achmet*? But Raillery a part; had I been upon the Pinch, I would have dropt the Turk, and kept the Christian: For a Christian Turk is a frank Atheist *once remov'd*, and tho' he makes Profession of a God, and of a Religion, most Men conclude he believes neither. Indeed by this unexpected Declaration,
you

you have disappointed me; I intended to prove, that *one only* Religion was Saving, and that all others were cast out of the *Act for Toleration*: But you have made a clever work of it, and discarded all Religions, nay, and I fancy, Salvation too.

Ariov. With Permission, Sir, tho' I approve the *Alcoran*, I may reverence the Gospel: And though I unlock Heaven's Gate to Musselmén, why must I shut it upon Christians.

Enseb. Why? One runs quite counter to the other, even in the most essential Points, both of Belief and Practice. Christian Religion tells us, Christ is God; the Mohometan, that he is not: That commands us to adore him; this forbid us: Now, Sir, if Truth favours the Turks, Christ is a mere Creature; and by consequence all Christians are downright Idolaters: If therefore God will be adored as a Being *Eternal*, infinitely *Wise*, and infinitely *Holy*; it's evident, you (who discover Truth on every Tittle of the *Alcoran*) cannot with a safe Conscience profess Christianity; for that great Oracle tell us, Christ is a Creature; and therefore, so soon as you commence Christian, you pay divine Honour to a Man, known, and acknowledg'd such: Now to adore God, as a Man, is not to worship him as a Being *Eternal*, infinitely *Wise*, and infinitely *Holy*: And to adore a Man, as God, is to strip the Almighty of all his Prerogatives, to rifle the Sanctuary, and to lay the consecrated Treasures at the Feet of a Creature: Here is flat Idolatry on the one Hand, and a Monster compos'd of Idolatry and Sacrilege on the other. So that to Sum up the Evidence, if Turcism be a true and allow'd Religion, Christianity is not; and so my Thesis is prov'd; that one Religion alone is Saving: Which glorious Quality to the Shame of Latitudinarianism, and the Scandal of Reason, you clap on Mahometism.

The Lady over-joy'd at the Defeat of *Ariovistus*, was not Mistress of her Transport: These Gentlemen, said she, are for ensuring Causes, and never speak under Demonstration: Then turning to him, Sir, (continu'd she) I pity your Malice; but I am glad of your Overthrow: You have been more at Variance with your self, than with your Adversary, and seldom recall'd one Absurdity, without advancing a greater; but at length, in Defiance of

of Sense and Reason, you have out-shot Extravagance it self, and seal'd a Million of Impertinencies with adorning Blasphemy: For you have rais'd up Mahometism upon the Ruins of Christianity, and sunk our blessed Saviour into an Impostor, to swell Mahomet into a Prophet. I counsel you to ship for *Asia* in our *Smyrna* Fleet, for our *English* Climate is mortal to a Turkish Constitution: These Animals can no more live here, than Toads or Spiders in *Ireland*. Our *English* Charity embraces all Men, besides Papists and Musselmen: Those have too much Religion for a reform'd Nation, and these too little.

This Picquant Irony gall'd *Ariovistus* to the Quick; Patience abandon'd him, and Passion ran away with his Judgment: So that at length he broke thro' all the Bounds even of Respect and Reason. Madam, said he, I perceive you are surpriz'd at my Doctrine: Out of Respect to your Ladyship, I freely condemn the Alcoran as Practice and Imposture; but then, give me leave to put the Gospel in the *Indice* also: They were both hammer'd on the same Anvil; this to hagg Men with Fears, the other, to divert 'em with pleasing Prospects of sensual *Elysiums*: We have been *Hob-goblin'd* too long into Religion; but, God be thank'd, the Vizard is torn off, and the Cheat is unmask'd, and now we dare play with those Monsters we once trembled at. We enter upon the Stage of this World like Beasts, and make as inglorious an *Exit*: Our Lives and Souls smoak into Nothing: We were sinng upon the Earth, as the *Leviathan* was in the *Deep*, to play. Seeing therefore our Days are few, it's Prudence to live apace: *Good* and *Evil* are words *ad placitum*, invented by some, to impose on others.

He was going on, when *Eusebius* put a stop to his Impudence. I suspected (says he) you acted hitherto in Masquerade; I am glad the Vizard is fallen off, and that the Monster appears in its own Shape: Men of your Principles should be coop'd up in Pest-Houses, their very Breath shoots Contagion, and their Conversation is Mortal. Your Atheistical Club has made Religion cheap, and Morality shameful: It has preach'd a considerable Part of the Nation out of Sobriety, and Principles root: It teaches young Gentlemen to swear and blaspheme, before they know the Malice of the Sins; and then

when

When Age opens their Eyes, they rather part with their Innocence than Prophaneness. Thus you espouse 'em to Wickedness, before they are able to commit it: But the Misery is, that those who curse God in their Youth, in good time will defie him; and others who transgress the Decalogue at ten, will laugh at it before twenty. Boldness grows upon us with Age, and all the Terrors of Conscience declines; they faint under the Weight of reiterated Crimes, and lose their *Emphasis*; and then when once we have got out of the reach of this Importunate Censor, we shall swallow down your accursed Principles, not only without Reluctance, but even with Pleasure: We shall not only countenance Atheism, but profess it; and easily perswade our selves we die like Beasts, to live like 'em.

I know you are no more able to defend your Morals, than your Faith; and I would rather detest, than confute 'em, were I not acquainted with the Latitudinarian Impudence. You vent such hideous Tenets, that they amaze Christians, and rather raise their Indignation, than call for a Confutation; like Puddles, they cannot be stirr'd without Infection, and like Plague-Sores, they endanger the Surgeon. Now because good Men sometimes think it more expedient to confute those Impieties with Silence, than Arguments, Libertines presently raise a Trophy, they sing *Pæana*, and cry out *Victory*. To cut off this retreat, I'll show you in short, that Vertue and Vice are not barely in Opinion.

And here I appeal to the Verdict of Mankind: Single out one Man, whose Reputation did not suffer under the very Suspicion of Vice; and if the bare Suspicion of evil, has such a degrading Quality in the Opinions of Men, Debauchery it self must have a greater. Human Nature has such an Abhorrence of Sin, that it cannot value the Wicked equally to the Virtuous. I never yet heard of a Man, who seriously commended another for Intemperance, or plac'd Lewdness among his Titles of Honour: Tho' Sobriety, Chastity, and Justice are run down in Practice, they stand fair in our Esteem, and no Man yet has attempted to disgrace an Enemy, by laying those Virtues to his Charge: In fine, it's impossible for a Man in his Wits, to esteem another less, because he is good: Nay, in this degenerate Age, nothing blasts more a rising

rising Reputation, than the Imputation of Wickedness; and even those, who in a frantick Transport applaud a Debauchee, upon cooler Thoughts despise him: If all Actions are equal, why are their Effects so different? If Vertue has no Advantage over Vice; why do the Profligates esteem *that*, tho' they embrace *this*? Why do Men practice Vertue with Confidence, and Vice with a blushing Face, and a trembling Conscience? Why do they Sin with Fear in their Looks, and an Earthquake in their Minds? These are terrible Symptoms, that the Difference between Good and Evil lies deeper than the Imagination.

Come, Sir, remember when you feel the Smart of everlasting Flames, you'll take small Pleasure in the Thought that once you derided 'em; you'll not suffer less in that dark Region, because you go laughing thither; nor endure the Torments better, because you would not believe 'em.

Ariovistus was of too haughty an Humour to bear so severe a Check with Patience, and too violent to dissemble his Resentment; wherefore turning to *Ensebius*; Sir, said he, you Rail better than you Reason: Our Tongues began the Dispute, our Swords must end it; you have left my Tenets, to attack my Person, and rather level at my Actions, than at my Religion: You are a Man of Honour, and can manage a Weapon, as well as an Argument; in a Word, I expect Satisfaction.

The Company began to Smile at this odd Rhodomontade, but *Eudoxus* told him, in controvertistical Debates there was no Appeal from Reason to the Sword; that it was more prudent to confess Errors, than to defend 'em; to cancel past Crimes, than to commit new ones.

But *Ensebius*, who resolv'd to discountenance Latitudinarianism, by confounding its Abettor, took him up roundly. Sir, said he, I fear your Gasconades no more than your Arguments; nor your Sword more than your Reasons: Your Conduct is as strange as your Religion; because I have wounded your Principles, you invite me to tilt at your Body: No, no, Sir, I value my Life too much to expose it for a Punctilio; and your Soul, to send it into the other World with a Rapier: I had rather swing off *Tyburn* into Eternity, than to be duell'd into it; for a Duel is a very ill Distemper to die of.

Besides;

Besides; should I accept your challenge, perchance you might disappoint me: I have known some huffing Bullies, who never were couragious, but when they stood out of the Sword's Reach: They would send you a *hundred Defies* for a *Word*, but had too much Honour to justify one; nay, they would upon second Thoughts submit to a Bastinade, rather than occasion Bloodshed; and if once their Adversary drew Blood, like Wizards, they had no Power to hurt him; in fine, they would always begin the War, and constantly made the first Overtures of Peace; and thus they shew'd at once both Courage and Discretion: Whether this Character fits you, I dare not determine; this notwithstanding I must affirm, that those who pretend to believe *least* the Terrors of another World, apprehend them *most*; and no Men fear *more* eternal Torments, than those who deny the Soul's Immortality: Lay by your Sword for a more urgent Occasion; Fencing will never relieve a Controversy abandon'd by Reason; a satisfactory Return to my Arguments will support you much better than a Push: For tho' you chance to foil me at Tilting, you will not disarm my Reasons.

Ariovistus was too proud to submit to Truth, tho' he was too weak to withstand it; he could not defend his Errors, and would not abandon 'em; so that in a Huff he call'd for his Horse; rub'd off, and left the Field to *Ensebins*.

His Friend apologiz'd for his Rudeness, and cast his Incivility on the Excess of Passion. I hope, said he to the Company, you will excuse *Ariovistus*. I confess he is to blame, but oftentimes Anger runs away with the Judgment; the wisest Men are subject to Indiscretions; He was baffled, and you know a Defeat to a Man of Honour is a mortifying Misfortune; in fine, having lost his Cause, you must not wonder if Patience deserted him.

Enseb. I excuse his Incivility, but condemn his Prudence; he saw his Error, why did he not abjure it? He saw Truth, why did he not embrace it? A Man that will pawn his Soul to rescue his Honour, forfeits both: But, I confess, in vain we expect Prudence of Libertines: Men without Religion, are always without Reason; they may boast of Science and Wit till Doom's-day, but no Body can believe they are over-stock'd with either: No, no; they have only just Knowledge enough to see their Errors,

Errors, and Wit enough to ensure their Damnation; when once they are drench'd in loose Principles, they are past Recovery: They turn all Antidotes into Rats-bane, and so either live in Obstinacy, or die in Despair.

Then taking *Endoxus* aside: Are you not, continu'd he, almost sick of Latitudinarianism? You saw how weakly *Ariovistus* defended it; yet he was not ill provided of those Materials, that are necessary to plead well a bad Cause; he manag'd his Argument to the best Advantage, and edg'd his Reasons with all the little Artifices of Language and Confidence; but Truth has prevail'd over Imposture, and he carries home nothing but Chagrin and Confusion. I hope Providence has reserv'd the Profit of his Defeat for you; he has condemn'd all Religions, and Christianity among the rest; and at the same time turns Atheist to live a Libertine.

Endox. Nothing but Rage drove *Ariovistus* into that Precipice, he was upon a Pinch, poor Gentleman, and shot Blasphemy when he had spent his Reasons; his Performance falls short of my Expectation. I perceive that Boasting is not an Argument of Wit, and that Confidence and Truth are not always on the same Side. *Ariovistus* who caus'd my Infidelity, has now cur'd it; I owe my Conversion to the Weakness of his Proofs, and to the Strength of yours. Christianity is certainly the only Saving Religion; but I am hamper'd in a Labyrinth, and unless you lend me a Hand shall wander eternally in a *Meander* of Mistakes: For Christian Religion branches out into a Thousand Sects, our Island is a kind of *Pantheon*, and our People, like the old *Arabians*, bend to the Breath of every pretended Inspiration. Some pretend Law, others Scripture: These Antiquity, those Novelty, and others Illumination. It's hard to calculate up all the Religions that divide the Nation, and almost impossible to examine them. If I must chuse none before I have impartially survey'd all, I may live a *Seeker*, and die an *Atheist*. Are all those Communions Saving? Or is there but one?

Euseb. There is but one Saving Congregation, and the Discovery of it is easier than you imagine: In a few Days I will put you in the Way to Heaven, which none can miss, but those who are resolv'd to overlook it. Interest byasses some, Education others, Faction deludes many, and

and Sensuality over-bears more: In fine, when Men consult their Inclinations, and model Religion by the Advice of Passion, you must not wonder, if they take Fancy for Revelation, and hug Illusion for Truth.

Eusebius staid a Week with *Endoxus*, and settled his Judgment. Truth flash'd such a Light on his Understanding, that he admir'd his former Blindness, and thought it more difficult to mistake the true Church, than he did before to find it; he learnt what he was to do, as well as what he was to believe; and resolv'd to square his Thoughts and Actions by the Rule of his Duty: He has kept his Purpose, and at present has the Reputation of a accomplish'd Gentleman, and, what he values most, of a pious Christian. This Providence, which permitted *Theomachus* to fall from a State of Vertue, into a deplorable Habit of Vice, rais'd young *Endoxus* from the Abyss of Vice, to the Top of Vertue; to teach poor Mortals, that the Sinner must not despair, nor the Saint presume.

Eusebius having brought this great Business to a most happy Conclusion, return'd to *London*, and gave Notice to *Theomachus* of his Arrival.

DIALOGUE XIII.

Having settled *EUDOXUS*, *EUSEBIUS* meets *THEOMACHUS*, who offers to believe the Existence of a God upon good Reasons, though not Mathematically evident.

Eusebius the next Morning gave *Theomachus* a Visit. He found him in the Company of some Gentlemen of his Cabal, whom the Noise of the Dispute had alarm'd; they were concern'd that *Eusebius* had the Face to stand up in Defence of God, to plead so warmly against Atheism, and that after the first *Camisado* he was return'd to beat up their Quarters. *Theomachus* persuaded himself, that the Journey of *Eusebius* was a mere put-off, and that he had really no Business in the Country, but to wave the Conference at *London*, and so spread abroad his late Engagement, you may be sure, to his own Advantage: He flatter'd himself, and others also, that the Dispute was at an End, and being freed from his Enemy, he gave still

A a

Liberty

Liberty to his Tongue, and launch'd out into Panegyricks of his vast Performance, to the Prejudice of Truth and Modesty: The News of *Eusebius's* Arrival damp'd his Hopes, and convinc'd him, he had rais'd a Trophy before the Victory: He had no Mind to engage, nor could he Retreat with Honour; but, in fine, he resolv'd upon the Conference, as the less Evil, and invited his Friends to the Skirmish: He receiv'd *Eusebius* with Demonstrations of Civility, and was rather prodigal than sparing of Carresses: After many reciprocal Complements, *Eusebius* address'd himself to *Theomachus*.

Euseb. Sir, at our last Meeting I charg'd *Atheists* with Imprudence, because being uncertain whether there were a God, a Hell, or a Heaven, they liv'd as if there were certain there were no such Things; you endeavour'd to fence against the Charge, and to plead not Guilty; because, though you should take up, and model your Life by the Rules of the most severe Morals, this ungrateful Restraint would only serve, perchance, to lessen your Torments in the next Life, if there be a God, but would never be able to set you in Heaven: For God, said you, requires an indispensable Homage, not only a well regulated Life, but a stable and undoubted Belief of his Being; the one is of small Advantage without the other; you pretended this Steadiness was not in your Power, and ask'd convincing Reasons to settle and fix your Judgment; I promis'd you Satisfaction, and am come to keep my Word; but I suppose an Evidence below that of Mathematical Demonstrations will satisfy you.

Theom. The very Question is reflecting, and you must either suspect my Wit or my Judgment to propose it: I know God is neither a *Line*, *Superficies*, nor *Solid*, he comes not within the *Predicament* of a Figure, and therefore lies out of the reach of Mathematicks: A Man that will acquiesce to nothing but strict Demonstrations, would do well to disband from Society, to lock up his Reason in his Closet, and only carry it about him on extraordinary Occasions; he may take up with the *Scepticks*, and doubt of his own Being: No Man can demonstrate by *Euclid*, or *Archimedes*, there is such a City as *Constantinople*, or that there has ever been such an Emperor as *Augustus*; and yet, God be thank'd, upon the credible Testimony of those who have seen the one, and

and of those Authors who have writ of the other, I no more doubt of them, than of this unquestionable Principle, *Pars est minor toto* : Some Things may possibly be false, though I dare pawn my Life, they are not.

Enseb. Your Discourse is *reasonable* : For were you and I cast upon a desert *Island*, by the Strefs of Wind and Weather, and should we find in this abandon'd Region a stately Palace, built with all Symmetry of Art, we should conclude, it was the Work of an Architect, not of *Nature* or *Chance*; nor would it be in our Power to doubt of it : yet 'tis *possible* for blind Matter to *Rendezvous* it self into a stately *Louvre* ; for by a lucky Meeting of Atoms, it may be jumbled and settled in this beautiful and regular Form. A hundred Thousand blind Men (tho' they set out from all the Parts of the World) might possibly meet together upon *Black-Heath*, and draw up in *Rank and File* ; yet should we see this extraordinary great Army in Battle-array, without the help of Syllogism, we should infer, they were led to the Place, and each conducted to this Station by some, who had better Eyes than they.

I conceive likewise you do not require *Physical Demonstrations*, *id est*, convincing Proofs drawn from Sense ; for God being suppos'd a Spirit, cannot fall under corporal Sense, and though he should present himself to the Eyes by assuming a Body, the Spectacle might amaze us, but could not give us any rational Assurance, that there is an *infinite Spirit*.

Theom. I ask such Proofs as leave the Understanding satisfied, and fix the Judgment, and remove all prudent Doubt ; for such Arguments deserve as firm an Assent, as the most strict *Mathematical Demonstrations*. I am as sure there is such a Place as *Constantinople*, as that the first Proposition of *Euclid* is true ; and doubt no more, but *Cæsar* was then that I am.

Enseb. 'Tis easy I see to agree in Preliminaries, when the one Side proposes nothing but what is just, and the other will receive what is reasonable : You have admitted what neither in Prudence, nor Reason you could reject, and I have only ask'd what I could not omit, without betraying the Interest of Truth, and the Merits of the Cause I have undertaken to defend. Now seeing the Subject is not capable of *Mathematical Demonstrations*, nor even of *Physical Evidence* in the State, we are, methinks,

I apprehend two Ways by which God can manifest his Being to Man: First, by an internal Impression stamp'd with his divine Signet in our Nature, which leads us naturally to the Knowledge of his Existence, as the innate Light of our Understanding shews us the Truth of the first *Principles of Discourse*.

Secondly, by visible Effects, which Reason tells us must be father'd on some Cause, and which without Constraint and Violence, our Understanding cannot attribute to any thing but a Being infinitely Powerful, infinitely Wise, and infinitely Good.

Theo. I agree, these two Ways would be sufficient to settle a reasonable Man in the Belief of a Deity, and that an Atheist would be the most absurd, the most unreasonable Creature in the World, if he requir'd more.

Euseb. Well, Sir, hitherto we have walk'd Hand in Hand, our Judgments have been Uniform, and I hope our good Intelligence will continue in the following Conference. I will prove you have these very Proofs of his Being, you confess sufficient, and as plain as you could in Reason expect, supposing he were. Let us therefore discuss things in Order, and produce our Proofs in their Turn; when we confound Arguments, we confound *Idea's*, and only contemplate Truth through a Cloud.

DIALOGUE XIV.

The first Proof for a Deity, drawn from the universal Consent of Mankind.

Euseb. **T**HE Notion of a God is so deeply ingrafted in our Minds, that it seems to be twisted and interwoven with our Nature; it's of the same Date with our *Species*, it runs through our Veins with our Blood, and is convey'd to us from our Ancestors; it's neither fix'd to Climate, nor Complexion, it takes in all Times, as well as all Places: It's engraven in the Hearts of the *Africans*, as well as of the *Asiatics*; the barbarous *Tepinbays* of *Brasil* feel the Impression, as well as the most polite *Europeans*; and the very brutish *Hotentots* of the *Cape*, in spite of Savageness, shew they are Men mere

y by acknowledging a supreme Being ; the old *Assyrians* have left Posterity a convincing Testimony they believ'd God, because they coin'd false ones ; they had never multiply'd Divinities, had they believ'd there was none, nor paid divine Worship to Statues, had they not been perswaded there was some Being above them, that commanded Homage, because he deserv'd it.

The *Medes* brought down the *Assyrian* Grandeur, and bury'd the Empire, together with its Emperor, in a Grave of Althes ; yet these new Conquerors, who annull'd the old Laws, and enacted new ones, who thrust out ancient Customs to make room for others, quarrell'd not with the *Assyrians* about the Belief of a God, they liv'd in the same Persuasion ; *Nebuchadonozor* would needs share Worship with his Maker, and so set up his own Statue to receive those Honours which belong'd to the supreme Being.

The *Persians*, Successors of the *Median* Greatness, succeeded also in their Belief of a Deity : The conquering *Macedonians* agreed in this Point with the vanquish'd *Indians* ; and *Rome* surpass'd all other Nations in Superstition, more than Courage ; she built her Greatness upon the Supposition of a Deity, and as some Remark, grew so Great, because she was so Pious : She found the Stamp of a Divinity, where-ever she carried her victorious Arms, and the Conquest of Foreign Gods, as well as of Captive Princes, set off her Generals Triumphs. In Word, the Belief of a Deity reach'd as far as the Plantations of Men ; it has never yet been shut out of one City, one Bourg, or perchance one Family : The most barbarous Wretches that ever were, knew there was a Deity, tho' they mistook in the Application of their Worship. You may almost as soon find a People without souls, as without a God, they rather will dedicate an Altar to an unknown Deity, than have none.

The *English*, *Dutch*, *Portuguese*, and *Spaniards*, braving the Fury of the Winds, and the threat'ning Surges of the enrag'd Ocean, have discover'd a new World in our Days, almost equal to the *Old*, they have rifled the very Wildernesses, and ransack'd the Mines ; where-ever they met with the Traces of Men, they fell upon the footsteps of a God ; these Barbarians that liv'd without Laws, without Houses, without Commerce, were sel-

dom found without Temples; and though a savage Education, and more savage Vices had obscur'd the Notion, they had not the Power to deface it; 'twas legible in the very Night of Idolatry, in the Obscurity of Errors, and some Nations thought 'twas less Absurdity to worship the Devil, than to deny a God. Now if you call for Proofs, I can present you a thousand, as strong and satisfactory, as the Subject will bear: Past Matters of Fact can only be convey'd down to us by Written or Oral Tradition; and those of our own Time, that lie at a Distance, can only be prov'd by credible Witnesses; what I maintain has all these Supports, and by consequence can be question'd only by those, who will be sure of nothing, but that they doubt of all things.

Theo. Whether this be true or false, your Cause will not be much the better, nor mine worse; yet I must tell you, you are mistaken in your Account: I have read in *Acosta*, and others, that divers People, both in the *East* and *West-Indies*, live as well without a God, as without Houses; they love nothing but their Ease, and fear nothing but their bordering Enemies: Besides, our *European Atheists* muster'd up in one Body, would make a considerable Figure; and *London* alone, upon an emergent Occasion, can draw out a brisk *Brigade*: I am confident at least we exceed you in Quality, if you surpass us in Number; and why may not the one balance the other?

Euseb. Oh! I may cry out with *Seneca*, *Mentuntur qui dicunt se non sentire Deum, nam etsi tibi affirmant interdum, noctu tamen & soli dubitant*; they Lye who say they believe no God, for though by Day in the hurry of Company, and heat of Debauch, they may profess *Atheism*; yet in Darkness and Retirement they change their Mind: Say, if you please, no God is the Will of *Manny*, but the Opinion of *None*: But if some Authors have said so, others equally credible, have contradicted 'em; yet all agree that those People have more of the Beast, than of the Man; they wander in the Woods like *Tygers*, without Commerce, without human Society, they worry their own Species, and prey upon their nearest Relations; so that like Children, tho' they have Reason, they want the Use of it: They live without Reflection, and consequently without Discourse; and indeed I do not see why Diseases of the Soul may not untune the Organs of the

the Brain, as well as those of the Body ; why Education and Barbarity may not obstruct the Operations of the Intellect, as well as a Frenzy. The whole Set of *European Atheists*, are but a Pack of daring Debauchees, who pride in Infamy, and blush at Modesty : *They Reason ill, and Live worse* ; they hate Truth no less than Sobriety, and are too insignificant, either to countenance a good Cause, or prejudice it : Their Votes, like Cyphers, without an Unite, make no Number.

But let us Face your Atheist with those who believe a God, and we shall find after a general Muster (though you appear also at the Head of the *London Brigade*) an infinite Disproportion. Would it not be true, that all the Citizens of *London* profess the Religion of the *Church of England*, although one *Presbyterian* or *Recusant* upon Examen should be found among them ? And will you contest this universal Verity, that reasonable Creatures endeavour to defend themselves from the Injuries of Wind and Weather, because some brutish Savages lie under the open Canopy of Heaven without Fence, or a Hut to skreen off the Heats of the Summer, or the Cold of the Winter ? Yet the Disproportion between you and us, is ten Times greater, than between one *Recusant*, and the Citizens of *London*, or between those Men who make Provisions against the Rigour of Seasons, and those who do not : If therefore in one Case, a particular Fact does not prejudice the universal Inference, why must it in the other ? *Aristotle* tells us, that some rejected this Principle, *A thing cannot be, and not be at the same time*, and that *Anaxagoras* maintain'd *Snow is Black* ; yet, I suppose, if I say the Principle is receiv'd by all Mankind, you will not except against my Assertion. I may then conclude, that the Persuasion of a God runs through our whole *Species*, and spreads as wide as the remotest *Colony*.

Theom. If I dispute my Ground by Inches, we shall make a long Work of our Conference : Pray go on.

Euseb. Our difference about the Matter of Fact being at an End, I ask you the Origin of this universal Impression ; from whence comes it that this *Chymical* Object continually encounters and haunts our Understanding ? Why do our Apprehensions rove in another World ? And flush the Being of a Deity ?

Theo. Some witty Gentlemen will tell you, this Notion came into the World by an accidental Fright ; Men started at Thunder, before they knew the Cause of it, and some of greater Wits, than their Neighbours, improv'd this panick Fear into Religion ; they perswaded the *Mobile* there was some Body above, that spoke aloud, and breath'd forth his Anger in Flames and Smoak : Others with much Probability affirm this Persuasion springs from an innate Fear in the Mind of Man, and a restless Apprehension of the worst that may happen, *Primum in orbe Deos fecit timor.*

Enseb. A Man that will not take Notice of the true Reason of Things, which generally is but one, may forge a hundred false ones ; for though one Path leads to Truth, a thousand conduct us into Error. Pray, Sir, seeing Men were first frightened, and then cheated into the Belief of a Deity, of whom did that witty Gentleman borrow the Notion ? He was certainly embu'd with the Idea of a God, before he could communicate it to his Neighbours. The Cheat was first put on him before he deceiv'd others. Who impos'd on him ? His Name deserves a considerable Place in History, and I do not see, why our Fore-fathers should have been less careful to conserve his Memory, who slyly brought the Notion of a God into the World, than his who convey'd the *Trojan* Horse into the City, and betray'd it to the *Grecians* ; But though you satisfy this *Quære*, the same Question will return, who cozen'd him ? Nor will it cease, till we discover the Origin, or have run you up beyond the first Moment of Time ; the only tolerable Escape is to resolve this Fear into Tradition.

But pray tell me, how you know this Impression *ab immemoriali*, has been handed down from Father to Son ? You are Men of Parts, and glory more in Wit than Grace ; you generally scorn all Authority but your own, and appeal even from what we call *Scripture*, to *Reason* : Back your Assertion with any tolerable Proof, and for once I'll take it for Demonstration : All you can say amounts to this, that perchance long ago, some thinking Brain wrap'd up in continual Speculation, blundered upon the Notion, and sent it round ; that it found a kind Reception ; and even since has been kept in Countenance and Reputation ? But it is not strange that one mere *Perchance*

chance that stands for *no God*, should weigh more with an Atheist, than positive Reason for him?

This Tradition is of a very ancient Date, and older in all Probability than the Invention of Writing; for ought that you know, it has been from the Beginning; nay, I may add it's ten Times more likely, it sprang up with Man, than that a Man first started the Imposture, and others made it over to Posterity: For the Impression of a God sinks into the Souls, not only of those polite and civiliz'd Nations, who have preserv'd from Oblivion some Remnants of past Transactions and Books of Records, but even of those who are as ignorant of what pass'd in the last Age, as of what was done two thousand Years ago, and of those whose *Arithmetick* goes not beyond their Fingers, nor their Knowledge beyond their own Remembrance. What likelihood then, that those who are Strangers to all Tradition, should be so well acquainted with this?

But to Dispatch the first Gentleman; when the natural Cause of Thunder was discover'd; why was not the Cheat unmask'd? Why did not the *Phantome* disappear at the Sight of Knowledge, which Ignorance and Error had created? Were the Understandings of Men so cowardly with the Cheat, they durst not struggle against it? Or were they so enamour'd of their Fears, as to cherish the Object of their Torment? If this be true, our Ancestors were cast in another Mould than we, they hugg'd what we hate, and doted on what we abhor. If a Man imposes on us by a Surprise, so soon as the Cheat is discover'd, we stand upon our Guard, and like Birds, shot at, grow wild: We become cautious and reserv'd, we stand off in Jealousy and Suspicion: But our tame Ancestors, who were Thunder'd and Lighten'd into a Belief of a God, kept up the Illusion when they had unvizarded the Trick: They lik'd, it seems, the Conceit, and were pleas'd with Fears and Apprehensions, they resolv'd to make them Immortal.

Theo. These Gentlemen will tell you, Time wore out the Memory of the Imposture, but not the Effects: The Cheat was soon forgot, tho' the Notion of a God remain'd; Education kept this on Foot, and continu'd it to our Time; and indeed the Original Tincture of Education seldom wears out: Though some inbred Principles are impregnable

ble against Education, yet some Customs arise from Education, which Nature it self can hardly deal with.

Enseb. *Atheists* when they have lost their other Holds retreat to Education; they look upon it as an advantageous Post, and think themselves *there*, not only out of the Reach of Surprize, but of Assault; it is their darling Argument, and therefore deserves a peculiar Consideration. I desire you therefore to keep it for a Reserve, at present I have the second Gentleman upon my Hands, and I must do him Right before I leave him. You say, *Other Gentlemen affirm with great Probability, that the Persuasion of a God springs from an innate Fear in the Mind of Man, and a restless Apprehension of the worst that may happen; and then you prop the Assertion with the Authority of a Poet.* This is in Mr. Hobbs's Phrase; *Fear of Power invisible, feign'd by the Mind, or imagin'd from Tales publickly told, is Religion.*

This Evasion is liable to great Exceptions; for supposing Man has an innate Fear, that he is subject to imagine dreadful Things, and apt to scare himself with ghastly Apparitions of his own Coining; yet he cannot fear, unless he frames, or finds the Object that raises this unquiet Passion: What Object can we frame in the Shop of his Apprehensions, which has not some Relation to Misfortunes he has either seen or heard of? The Fancy may make strange Combinations, and tie together things that have no Connexion, yet it must know those things before it links them together; for the Apprehension, like the Will, cannot work upon those Materials that lie out of its Sphere. When the Streams of the Hypochondry mount up to the Brain, a Man may fancy himself at the last Gasp, tho' his Pulse beat even, and he enjoys perfect Health, for he has seen others Die, and knows he is liable to the same Fate; but the most splenetick Coxcomb in the World cannot fright himself with a Plurisie, unless he knows there be such a Disease in Nature. The Notion of a God may therefore awaken Man's Fear, but the most timorous Nature cannot tremble at the Apprehension of a God, unless such a Being be known: Seeing therefore the Knowledge of a God, precedes his Fear who stamp'd on Man the Impression.

Theom. We must take Things as we find them. Man depends originally on himself, he is beholding to no exterior

superior Principle for his Existence, he is as he ever was, and will always be without any intervening Change: The Notion of Deity (these Gentlemen say) has stuck close to him from Eternity, and in all Probability will go on with him till the Species fall into Nothing; but to what Intent this Fury hovers about him, Doctors have not determin'd; some notwithstanding are inclin'd to believe, that Nature envious of Man's Happiness, rais'd this spirit to cool his Hopes, and sophisticate his Pleasures.

Enseb. Your Gentlemen *Incognito*, who argue by Proxy, triumph without doubt, and fancy this Answer has made the Business wonderfully clear; but I appeal to the common Sense of Mankind, whether it does not rather start Difficulties than solve them. I have prov'd, that Men knew God before they fear'd him, and consequently that his Fear could not spring from any innate timorous Disposition, but that it must be ascribed to the great Author of Nature, who has stamp'd on our Souls the Knowledge of his Being; now your young Gentlemen very confidently tell me, Man was *ab aeterno*, and stands indebted for his Being to no Body but his own Nature, and they thrust on me this fine System, with such an Air of Assurance, as if it were clear beyond Debate, and near allied to the first Principles; whereas the thing is not only false, but absurd to Dotage, as I shall make out in its proper place; but *abyssus abyssum invocat*, one Absurdity begets others in another; a bad *Thesis* is always supported with weak Proofs.

But for the present I admit your *Hypothesis*. *Aristotle* assumes this Aphorism as a Principle, *Natura nihil agit frustra*, Nature does nothing in vain; now whether we cast our View without us, or within us; whether we survey the great World, or the less, we shall subscribe to the Maxim: The natural Inclination of all things, either tend to the Perfection or Conservation of Individuals, or else to the Beauty and Symmetry of the whole. Sympathies and Antipathies have their proper Stations and employments; every Being, tho' never so minute, acts its Part in the great Theatre of the Universe; there are no Mutes in the whole Creation, that appear merely to fill the Stage: Seeing therefore all other Things have their Task cut out for them, and labour in their several posts, why should this Notion of a God like a Drone stand

stand idle without Office, without Employment? Has Nature flung it into the World at Random, as the Ostrich lays her Eggs, and then flies into the Desert? Why should you arraign her Prudence in this Point, who shews her Wisdom in the Management of all things besides? Ought we not rather to question your Integrity, than your Conduct?

Besides, whether all things were *ab aeterno* of themselves, or jostled into Being by a lucky Hit of Chance, and *Legerdemain*, they have at least happen'd as well, as if an infinite Wisdom and Power had a Hand in the Contrivance; but it's most certain, that an infinite Wisdom would never have engrafted in the Minds of Men, so vain, so superfluous a Principle, had there been no God in the World; therefore seeing such a Principle runs thro' the whole Mass of Mankind; we have all the Reason in the World to conclude *there is a God*.

A Person of Quality in the Company, who measur'd his Wit by his Estate, would needs come into *Theomachus's* Succour; he thought his Title would add a Lustre to his Arguments, and that he might silence *Eusebius* by Authority, tho' he could not by Reason: Methinks, said he, with Submission to better Judgments, *Theomachus* has overlook'd the decisive Solution of the Difficulty; yet I must needs say, he has behav'd himself in the Contest like a Man of Parts, he has not shrunk under the Character of a witty and well-spoken Man, but maintain'd his Reputation; yet oftentimes Warmth and Eagerness let Advantage slip, and we remember not in a Hurry those Arguments that occur, when our Temper is cool and sedate: I do not see why we should have Recourse to accidental or natural Fears, or why we should fetch this Notion from the further end of Eternity; we can reconcile the Difference, and stop the Breach at less Expence of Time and Labour: I am apt to think Education will unriddle the Mystery; we easily take the first Tincture, and when it's well imbib'd, it never wears off: The first Rudiments stick so close, that oftentimes they never leave us, and so by a pardonable Mistake, even wise Men ascribe many things to our Nature, which we owe to the sole Instruction of our Nurture. *Turcism* runs in some Families, Popery in others, and the reform'd Religion in mine: Whence comes this Variety

piety but from Education, and a certain Influence of the Climate? Had I been born at *Constantinople*, I had taken the *Turban* instead of a Hat, and Circumcision in place of Baptism; had I *Spain* or *Italy* for my Country, Popery would have been my Religion, and in all Probability should have been as ready to Fight for *Clement* the Pope's Prerogative of *Primacy*, as I am now to Fight against it: Education alone has continu'd Religions; we are Protestants in *England* now, because our Parents and Governours were so the last Age: The Turks have taken their *Alcoran* from their Ancestors, and the present Papists, Transubstantiation, seven Sacraments, and the Mass from theirs: Now if our Fore-fathers by Education could infuse into us the Belief of these several Religions, why not that of a God? And if they could, why should we craze our Brain, and exhaust our Spirits in the Pursuit of another Origin?

The Company applauded my Lord's Performance, and some were for petitioning for a higher Patent, for the signal Service he had done the Nation.

Euseb. Under favour, my Lord, this Expedient will not do; nay, those Difficulties I object against *Theomachus* turn upon your Hypothesis with no less Violence than his: For this Notion of a God could not be spread by Education, before it was in the World; it could not be toft from past Ages down to the present, unless it was in past Ages; and if it was, it either was *ab eterno*, or began in Time: If you say the first, you build the whole roof on mere Conjecture and Supposition, nor can you make one Tittle of it good, without begging the question: If you say the second, than either it began with Man, or after him; if with Man, then God who made Man stamp'd on his Mind this Impression; if it began after him, pray who first sail'd into the other World, and made the Discovery of this airy Spectre? Where did he live? And when? Or at least if you are not able to date the Birth of the Notion, shew me when it was not, and I will pay your Argument the same Respect I owe your Person; but I cannot take Words for Reason, nor a proofless Supposition for Evidence: You are the Capital Wits of the World; cautious Persons, that will not be impos'd on, that in all Occasions call for Evidence.

Besides

Besides, according to the Characters of Education, and Nature, the Notion has no Resemblance with Education, but every Line, every Stroke, represents Nature to the Life. We say Self-love, and the Inclination to Pleasure are Natural to Man, because we see these two Passions accompany him in all Ages, in all Places, and in all Employments; we love our selves now, as our Ancestors did six thousand Years ago; we pursue Pleasures in 1702, with the same Eagerness our Fore-fathers did in 1000, and even those who acting by more high and divine Motives fly Pleasure, cannot avoid the Inclination: The Desire of Glory, according to all Men, rises also from Nature, because it puts the Thoughts of all Men in a Ferment, it awakens their Industry, and enlivens them for Action; we all love to survive the Grave, and hate that our Name should be nail'd up in the Coffin: This Persuasion begun with Man, and has continued in his Blood without Variation, without Interruption, it warms old Age, and fires Youth, it Assaults the Peasant, it captivates the Prince; those who dare not fetch Glory from the Camp, pursue it at the Bar, they plead up their Names, when they want Resolution to fight them up; in fine, Nature is the same in all Men, it's stable, uniform, and permanent; but Education is of another Complexion; 'tis always upon the Change; Time, Interest, and Conquest establish new Customs, they set up new Principles of Education, and proclaim new Maxims: The Conquest of *William* the First forc'd *England* to bow to new Customs, as well as new Masters; it abolish'd the old Laws, together with the Ancient Kings, and our Education became *French* with our Governours: Look where you will, and you'll find Education always follow'd the Fortune of the State, the Subversion of this was a Prelude to the Establishment of that.

If therefore upon Inquiry, we find the Instinct of a God has pass'd untouch'd, through all the Revolutions of Times and Empires; if it has bore up against the Fury of the most barbarous Conqueror; what can we conclude, but that it is fix'd and rooted in Nature? But that God has stamp'd this Character of himself upon us; and that it springs not from the Principles of Education? Now I have already demonstrated, that the Notion of a God possess'd all Men's Minds from the beginning of
Ages;

Ages; that it has stood immoveable, amidst all the Vicissitudes of Time, and all the Turns of Fortune: Empires have fallen either under the Weight of their own Greatness, or the Fury of the barbarous Conquerors: Nations have left Barbarity to take up Civility, and again abandoned Civility to replunge into Barbarity; they have quitted their old Habitations to seek out new ones, and lost their very Language with their Liberty: One Custom has justled out another, and Time has wore out that to make room for a Third: These strange Revolutions have wrought no Change in the Belief of a Deity; it has surviv'd Empires, and prov'd more durable than the Collossus of Rhodes, or the Temple of Diana; neither the Corruption of Nature, nor all the vain Attempts of Atheists, have been able to banish it from one Town, Village, or Family: The Notion of a God has made mankind in all Ages, and in all Places fall before it, and those Men who dare dispute against him cannot forbear to tremble. 'Tis then most certain, that either Man has a natural Propension, or that this Impression of a supreme Being is one.

In the mean time I do not doubt, but Education may admit our natural Inclinations, and rather tie them to one Object than another; for though naturally all Men are depend to Pleasure, yet what is agreeable to some, is not so to others; what touches smoothly my Organ, may grate against yours. *Domitian* delighted himself with sticking to his spears: *Nero* with driving Chariots: Some are for *Venus*, others for *Bacchus*: And this confining the universal Principle, rises either from Education, or Constitution, or both. Again, though the Desire of Glory be Natural and universal, yet Education often assigns the Object; and hence it is, that Punctilio's vary with the Climate; some place their Glory in overcoming an Enemy, others in pardoning him; some judge nothing more glorious than to ride at the Head of an Army, to sack Towns, and give Desolation before them; whilst others laugh at their Folly, and rap'd up in Speculation, think it more honourable to write of Wars, than to wage them: In a word, *Theomachus*, you perchance persuade your self nothing can be more illustrious than to defy God, whilst I am satisfied the true Glory of every rational Creature consists in Obedience to his Commands, and love to his Person:

Person : These are the Effects of Education, they vary with the *Meridian*, they become obsolete with Time, and like Fashions or *Almanacks*, grow out of Date.

Let us say the same of God ; though the Persuasion of a God be engrafted in Nature, yet Education may contribute to frame different Ideas of him, and to propagate various Worships : Some People fell before a *Crocodile*, others before a *Red Cloth*, the *Romans* worship'd Men, and some *Indians* the Devil : When once Ignorance had hatch'd these monstrous Ideas of God, and Authority had given them Credit, Education spread the Error, and handed it down to Posterity : But the Notion of a Divinity preceded the Infection of Education, and Men believed a supreme Being, and a true God, before they set up the Statues of a false one.

I grant that the different Sects which divide, and subdivide Christianity, owe their Propagation to Education (I mean *generally*) and what wonder ? For Christianity is a Reveal'd Religion, its Mysteries lie above the Reach of Nature, our Understanding cannot come at them ; God himself has been pleas'd to communicate them, he has writ them on Paper, not on our Hearts, and we must hear them before we can believe them : Parents take care, either by themselves, or others, to instill into their Children the Principles of those Sects they profess, and to chuse for them a Religion before they can make any Choice for themselves : Thus most Men enter upon their Parent's Religions, as they do upon their Estates, and resolve that, which will convey them into an endless Misery or Happiness, into mere Education : But the Existence of a God is printed in our Nature ; we know it without the Help of External Revelation or Preaching ; we are our own Scripture, our own Apostles.

But do not think, I deny Education can have any Part in framing in us the Knowledge of a God ; tho' it be natural for a Mother to love her Children, and for a Child to respect his Mother, yet Education concurs, this draws up those reciprocal Duties in more lively Colours, and puts the last Hand to the rough Draught of Nature : Just so is our present Controversy, tho' Nature leads us to the Knowledge of a God, yet Education hastens it ; this brightens oftentimes the Idea, and polishe's it with Instructions and Precepts : Thus, my Lord, I have return'd

an Answer to your Objection, and without the least Grain of Partiality prov'd, that *Atheists* retreat in vain to Education.

Theo. What you deny to Education cannot be refus'd to Policy. This Whim of a God was hatch'd in some Closet by a secret *Juncto* of Statesmen. It first issued from the Court, and was probably posted into the Country by Proclamation; Authority sent it Abroad, Fear kept it Countenance, and at last the Stamp of Sovereignty propagated it; the Trick took marvellously; the Apprehension of a Deity, the Terrors of eternal Pains, with the flattering Allurements of eternal Pleasure, aw'd the Subject into Obedience and Submission; and then these Effects, so beneficial to Government, easily persuaded Princes to cherish the Illusion, and to keep up the Imposture.

Enseb. Good God! That Men should be so wise to deceive themselves! Is the Belief of a God so conducing to the buoying up of human Society? So necessary for the suppressing of Disorders? And the Conservation of a just Subordination? 'Twere then to be wish'd, at least, there were such a Thing, and where I of the great Counsel of the Nation, I would offer a Bill to both the Houses for the Extirpation of Atheists, who endeavour to deprive the State of so excellent an Instrument of Government. But 'tis strange, that Man, into whose Soul, *Nature*, *Chance*, or *Necessity*, or what you think fit to call his originary Cause, have breath'd such a Sympathy to Commerce, such an Inclination to Society, should have left him so naked of those Materials that are necessary for carrying on any stable Correspondence, that he is forc'd to have Recourse to Fiction, to flie to Forgery, and to build the whole Frame of mutual Communication on Cheats, that are the Bane of Society, the Plague of Conversation, the Disturbers of Peace, and declar'd Enemies to Order.

Secondly, what *Machiavel* first rais'd this Spirit, that all the Power of Wit pointed with Debauchery, has never been able to conjure down; what great *Nebuchodonozor* rear'd up this gigantick Statue of a Deity, and then commanded all People and Nations to fall down and Worship it? Where did he keep his Court? In what part of the World did he Reign? In what *Olympiad* did he live? A credible return to these few *Queries* might possibly make some Impression on reasonable Men: But an *Hypothesis* in

the Air, that wants the Prop of Proofs, that is sustain'd by mere Conjecture or Possibility, must fall to the Ground: Authority without Reason makes but a lean Figure, and if you intend to win our Faith, first subdue our Understandings.

Thirdly, If the Notion of a Deity be a mere Trick of Statesmen, a sly Invention of Princes; methinks they should not startle at the Monster, they only fram'd to affright others; they may turn their Subject's Fears into Diversion, as well as Profit, and applaud their Cunning for this double Advantage of Obedience and Pleasure; but we see the contrary; Statesmen are no more secure from Throws of Conscience, than the *Mechanicks*, nor the *Prince*, than the *Peasant*; the Terrors of a God often rise with the *Character*; great Men most dread his Justice, because they most offend his Goodness. I ask then, how those who forbid others, become Dupes to their own Contrivances? If by *State-Magick* they conjur'd up this Phantom, why do they tremble at it? Did all the Princes of the World die *intestati*, without making over this great *arcanum Imperii* to their Successors? Were they cut off in one Night as the first-born of *Aegypt*? Or did they intomb this grand Secret with their Bodies? A Man that can swallow these Absurdities, rather wants *Hellebore* than Arguments, and I would sooner recommend him to a *Physician* than a *Philosopher*.

Fourthly, That *Hero* of your Faction, the great Mr. *Hobbs*, that able Politician, who wheedled himself first, and then a considerable Part of the Nobility out of Conscience and Religion too: That *Hobbs*, I say, who has left us a Draught of Government, I mean of Atheistical Policy, in *Folio*: Who knows as little what he says, as what he believes, crosses upon your System; he rather lays the Knavery at the Subject's Door, than at the Princes, and affirms point-blank the setting up of a God was to drive home Liberty, and to pen up Sovereignty, to countenance Disobedience, and to clip the wings of Authority: *It is impossible*, says he, *a Common-wealth should stand, where any other but the Sovereign hath a Power of giving greater Reward than Life, and of inflicting greater Punishments than Death; now seeing eternal Life is a greater Reward than the Life present, and eternal Torment a greater Punishment than the Death of Nature, it is a thing*

a thing worthy to be well consider'd of all Men, that desire by obeying Authority to avoid the Calamities of Confusion and Civil War, and what is meant in Holy Scripture by Life Eternal, and Torments Eternal; and then he lays before his Reader as fine a Scheme of Life and Death Eternal, as a Libertine can desire, or an Atheist invent: According to this Gentleman, those Princes that first set up the Notion of a God upon political Ends, were but puny Statists, they were as unacquainted with their Interest, as the Maxims of Ruling, for constituting a Superior Power, that could Reward more liberally, and punish more severely than they; they suggested new Pretences of Revolt to their Subjects, and shew'd a Secret till then unknown, viz. that on Occasions they might War upon their Leaders, not only without Sin, but even with Merit: For in the Hypothesis of a God, this Maxim is evident, God is to be obey'd before Man; now Experience teaches us, that Knaves can easily persuade the Mob, any Injunction of a Prince that lies a little heavy, is against God, and when once this Frenzy has seiz'd upon the Brains of the Vulgar, they flie to Arms, they slay out of Zeal, they butcher their Fellow-Subjects out of Devotion, and veil the *Prerogative* to *Property*, and the *Crown* to the *Prong* and *Pitch-fork*: These, I suppose, are the Reasons that move Mr. Hobbs to caution Princes against Religion, to question the Rewards of Vertue, and the Punishments of Vice: You see how you recede from the Opinion of Mr. Hobbs, and leave your *Patriarch* in the Lurch: It's unkind to treat a Gentleman with so little Ceremony, to whom you owe so much; he first brought *Atheism* into Credit, and like the Giant in the Fable, first war'd openly upon Vertue, and then turn'd his Fury against Heaven: He model'd you into a kind of Society, who before rang'd about the World like the wild *Tartars* or *Arabians*, without Government or Order: 'Twas he first rais'd Impudence to a Science, Frenzy to Wit, and Infidelity to Religion: From him you borrow your Errors, and even Arms to defend them: Why then will you disoblige a Man to whom your whole Fraternity stands indebted?

In a Word, the Belief of a Divinity could never be impos'd on Mankind, by the Cunning of any Prince or Statesman; for when one Man attempts to over-reach another, he has Recourse, without doubt, to Reason; now

I cannot persuade my self that Reason can invent a Cheat, that Reason cannot discover; for it's evident the Belief of a supream Being carries Dread and Terror along with it; it humbles Pride, checks Lewdness, and curbs the pleasing Sallies of Sensuality; it prescribes Laws to Interest, and Bounds to Pleasure, it restrains Thoughts no less than Actions; then how can a Man in his Wits presume, that upon the bare Proposition of the Doctrine, without any serious Examen, without the Recommendation of plausible Arguments, all Men should swallow the Imposture, and vote the Being of a God at the Expence of their darling and favourite Prerogative Liberty, of their Quiet and Tranquility? Before you can admit so palpable an Absurdity, you must suppose all Mankind flung up their Reason for Company-sake, or run mad to keep up the Frolick: You must suppose our Ancestors were of another *Species*, than we, that their Inclinations cross'd on ours, they plac'd their Pleasure not in Enjoyment, but Self-denial, their Liberty in Constraint, and their Happiness in Trembling.

But if you say they embrac'd the Tenets on Grounds fallacious at Bottom, but glaz'd over with the plausible Varnish of Sophistry and Paralogism; it's strange, that Reason after a hundred Attempts, for the space of many Ages, has never been able to tear off the Disguise, or to discover the Fallacy that was contrived by Reason: And yet it is more astonishing, that the universal Reason of Mankind has been wretchedly ensnar'd and blinded to so prodigious a Degree, as to take those Proofs for reasonable and solid, which upon the Principles of Atheists, were never able to give any rational Account of God's Existence, either by his Effects or Operations: You cannot believe this, unless you believe that Reason in self is unreasonable, or that the Reason of all the World was over-reach'd by that of one crafty Politician. If you dare venture to clap in with this Absurdity, I must confess your Faith is *Facile* and *Comprehensive* in some Cases, tho' straight-lac'd in others; and you cannot refuse to believe a God, unless you own it's in your Power to believe what is morally impossible, but not what is highly credible. To conclude, you have unriddled the Secret, it's a mere *State-Engine*, you say, a petty Craft to fright some, and flatter others into Obedience;

dience; disband therefore your Fears, run from Conscience, or out-grow it, place Good and Evil on the same Level, for nothing can be Evil below, unless there be a supream Law-giver above. A Child will scream out at its Nurse, under the disguise of a Vizard, but take it off, and he turns the very Object of Fear into Play and Diversion; you have unmask'd the Fourbery, you have discover'd the Imposture, why have you less Assurance than a Child? Why less Discretion? Why do you still sweat under the Awe of a Deity, and sometimes groan under the Lashes of Conscience? If you have been gull'd into these Frights, discourse your self out of them; Fear and Remorse are not very entertaining: If a Syllogism or two would rid you of these Incumbrances, I would have you try Conclusions: But alas! Your own Breasts confutes your Pretensions, when you affirm the Impression of a God is nothing but a Trick, your Tongue trembles together with your Heart, and like a Criminal at the Bar, you avow the Fact by a faint Denial.

Theo. Your Discourse amounts to this, that no Error can invade and subdue all Mankind: Now can any thing be imagin'd more universal than Polytheism? Did it not run through all Countries, as well as all Times? Did it not sweep away the Rich with the Poor? The Philosopher with the Illiterate? And the Prince with the Peasant? Through what Gate did this profane Worship creep into the World? If many Gods may be foisted in, why not one? Does the Greatness of the Absurdity facilitate the Imposture? Because a Plurality of Gods shocks Reason, more than an Unity; can Reason easier over-look the Contradiction? Does the Cheat lie out of Sight, because a Child may discover it?

Euseb. Polytheism (though it spread wide) was never Universal; We know as sure when it was not, and when it begun, as past Transactions can be known: The Memory of things past can only run down to us through the Channel of Tradition; Authors both Sacred and Profane mark its Origin; it takes its Rise from the Tower of Babel, and the first Emperor was Metamorphoz'd into the first Deity: Nor did it infect all People; some Millions of Jews detested the Sacrilege, and there are many probable Conjectures in spite of the Sorbone, that the Worship of one God continu'd in China two thousand

Years: But, however, since the Birth of Christianity, Polytheism has lost Credit and Empire, it only reigns where Ignorance and Barbarity domineer, and those poor Creatures hug the Cheat, who are willing to be deceiv'd.

Moreover, the Philosophers and wise Men of all Ages and Countries receded from the Multitude in this monstrous Veneration: *Plato* confess'd he was a *Polytheist* when he spoke in Jest, but a *Theist* when he spoke in Earnest: *Cicero* rallies the State *Theology*, and drolls upon those Gods in his Books he ador'd in the *Capitol*: *Seneca* burlesques the Multiplicity of Divinities; and in a Word, all the Heathen Divines as well as Poets evidently demonstrate, that those believ'd in *many* Gods, who follow'd Custom, and those in *one* who obey'd Reason: So that, tho' the wise Men were not Guilty of the Error, they were of the Sin, because they swam down the Stream with the Vulgar, they burnt Incense to Stones, offer'd Victims to Statues, and approv'd in their Actions what they condemn'd in their Judgment.

Nay, if we believe *Tertullian*, the very *Multitude* in their sudden Frights look'd up to Heaven, not the *Capitol*, and invok'd one God, not many: Whence we may draw with him this Inference, that Nature profess'd one God, whilst Corruption and Ignorance allow'd of *thirty Thousand*: But besides, in vain you beg universally of the Vulgar, the Vote of the Multitude separated from the Approbation of the Wise, is no more to be regarded than the Opinion of *Bedlams*; their Authority can be of no greater Weight, than that of Children, who have Reason, but cannot use it: They know as little what they do, as why: They act by no other Rule than Passion or Custom; like frightened Sheep, one treads on the Heels of another, and the Mistake of the first is follow'd by that of the whole Flock: In fine, they judge at random, take Things upon Trust, and stamp Truth and Falsehood with the same Impression; and so leave us no Marks to discover the Imposture.

But again, your Argument is so far from enervating my Discourse, that it confirms it: People had never ador'd false Gods, had they not been first persuaded there was a true one; as a Picture supposes some real Original, so a counterfeit Excellency supposes a real one: Who would

would counterfeit *Guineas* if there was no such Coin? Or cheat the World with false Diamonds if there were no true ones in Nature? The Heathens ador'd false Gods; I think we may therefore with a great deal of Probability infer, that Nature taught them there was a true one.

Now it's no hard Task to convince a Man that will stoop to Reason, that Polytheism might easily be set on Foot by Craft, Policy, or Corruption, though the Belief of one God could not: *First*, To satisfy the Senses, Men made God *Visible*. *Secondly*, To content the Imagination, that could not crowd all the Perfections of God in one Idea, they multiply'd the Divinity; then Blindness growing upon them with the Superstition, those things that were intended to represent his Perfections were applied to Men; and then Darknes seiz'd upon them to that Degree, that they deified Diseases, and adored those Obscenities in their Temples, they durst not name in civil Company. *Lastly*, To favour their Passions, and to give full Wing to unreasonable Appetites, they placed Adulterers in Heaven, Strumpets on Altars, and adored all Vices, that they might be exempt from the Practice of all Vertues; for who durst condemn what they ador'd? Or punish what they worship'd? What Crime might not be committed at Home with Honour and Impunity, that was reverenc'd in the Temples with Prostitution and Victims?

But if this Account does not please you, pray attend, and I hope you will receive full Satisfaction. *Polytheism* is a Sin of the deepest Dye, and therefore we cannot imagine Men plung'd into the very depth of Wickedness without previous Dispositions. Crimes like natural Bodies do not shoot out in a Moment, but leisurely: *Nemo repente fit pessimus*. Idolatry like all other monstrous Offences came upon us by Degrees: First Men carv'd Statues, then they honour'd them, and, in fine, ador'd them; and as the Cause of making them was various, so that of defying them was also: A Father, *says the wise Man*, afflicted with untimely Mourning, when he had made the Image of his Child taken away, now honoured him as a God, which was then a dead Man; and some fell into so desperate an Ignorance, as to erect Statues and Altars to those very Persons they mourn'd for; they con-

stituted Ceremonies for the Dead, as Cures for the Grief of the Living. *Sacra facta sunt quæ fuerunt assumpta Solatia. Min. Felix.*

In some places Idolatry sprung from the Pride of Princes, who substituted their Statues to supply their Presence, and commanded their Subjects to pay their Representative the Respect due to their Persons; and this Worship, though civil in its Origin, swell'd into Adoration by the servile Flattery of some, and the stupendious Blindness of others, and when once the Gate flew open to Illusion, Idolatry rush'd into the World like a Torrent, and bore down all before it. *Nebuchodonozzer* would be ador'd whilst he liv'd: *Alexander* obtain'd Worship of the *Persians*, but could not of his *Macedonians*; these to set up their Valour would never own their King was a God, the others deified their Conqueror to palliate the shame of their Defeat: The Roman *Cæsar*'s lov'd rather to be fear'd while they lived, than adored; they would first die before they would be thought immortal, and pretended no right to Sacrifices till Death cut off all Claim to Government; but then the ignorant Multitude and fawning Magistrate plac'd their Princes above the Stars, and built Temples to those whom they stabb'd in the Senate, or flung into the Common-shores.

In other Places, Polytheism and Idolatry came from Gratitude; the People dedicated Statues to those famous Men, who first founded their Cities, or improv'd them, who fram'd Laws, or invented Arts: And in Process of Time, the exterior Marks of Gratitude became Divine Worship: If you doubt of these Occasions, let me recommend to your perusal *Lactantius*, *Philastrius*, *Arnobius*, and *Min. Felix*, and I am confident you will urge no more for Satisfaction: Now if you ask me why the Notion of one God could not be impos'd on Mankind by Ignorance, Stupidity, and Custom, as well as Idolatry and Polytheism; I can only desire you to spend a Moments Reflection on what I have said already.

Theo. I perceive then you will not admit it possible, that any Error can be Universal: Pray do not balance plain Matter of Fact with Speculation. Did not all the World believe the *Antipodes* impossible? And do not the *Clowns* of all Nations to this Day take the *Moon* or *Sun* to be ten times bigger than the *fix'd Stars*.

Ensch. Whe-

Enseb. Whether an Error can be Universal or no, is not my Concern; tho' *Aristotle* denies it, and tho' it can never be made out by any Fact, that such an Error is possible, yet if a Confession will be any Advantage to your Cause, pray take it; however, I maintain, that the Persuasion of a God cannot possibly be such; and I think that the Assertion is made pretty clear already, yet to satisfy Doubts, and to cut off all Reply, I add an Argument, which has all the Appearance of Conviction.

There is a natural Light in Man's Understanding, that never deceives him; but then there is a Prejudice that always does: Were we exempt from this, we should seldom be in the Wrong; and were we devested of that, we should never be in the Right; we cannot throw our Mistakes on any in-bred Quality of the Intellect, for then false Judgments would be natural to it, and so we might take up with the Scepticks, and doubt of all Things, or rather we should be assur'd of this alone, that we were always in Error.

There are two Sources of Error, the one Exterior, which may be reduc'd to *Example*, *Education*, and *Sophistry*; these exercise a strange Empire on the Understanding, they impose upon it to Admiration, and almost force it into Error by proposing Objects under false Light; hence it comes, that Lewdness in hot Countries, and Drunkenness in cold, pass for *Peccadillo's*, although in themselves they are great Offences: The interior Causes are Three, the *Senses*, *Imagination*, and *Passion*; and any of these are able to propose things in borrow'd Colours, and represent them to the Understanding quite different from themselves; thus a Star having been represented to us from our Cradle no bigger than a Candle, we have found some difficulty to be disabused, not being able to reconcile the small Idea we take from our Sense, to that vast one we receive from Reason; our Imagination has been so employ'd in Matter, that it gives even Spirits its Proprieties; we are no more able to imagine our Souls without Extension, than a Mountain without a Valley; the Will being engag'd by Passion, byasses the Understanding, and forcing it to judge true whatever stands for our Advantage, leads us into a thousand Errors, and then 'tis very hard to discover the Mistake, when 'tis our Interest to be deceiv'd: Now, I say, the universal Belief

Belief of a God, cannot be ascribed either to the exterior Causes of Error, or to the interior: The first of the Assertion stands firm on those Reasons I have already brought; the second I prove beyond a Possibility of Doubting.

The Belief of a Deity cannot with any Colour of Reason be suppos'd to flow from any of these general Origins of Illusion, if it be rather contrary than conformable to them, if they rather prompt us to believe there is no God, than that there is one; for what Error can spring from those Causes, that have no Proportion to it, that rather stifle than foment it? Now, I appeal to Atheists themselves, whether they owe not a great part of their criminal Incredulity to Sense, Imagination, and Corruption of Heart; they have been so long accusom'd to juggle by Sense, that they seem to have lost the Faculty of Reasoning; they reject as Sophistry or empty Speculation whatever cannot fall under Sensation; they tell us, they cannot admit God to be the Object of their Faith, because he cannot be that of their Sense; their Imagination is lost in the Survey of his Eternity and Immensity, they cannot frame to themselves any tolerable Idea of his Essence, nor what he did, nor where he was before the World's Creation, and then this Nonplus of the Imagination puzzles the Understanding, and so they deny his Being, because they do not conceive his Essence, Attributes, and Occupation: In fine, the tainted Inclinations that tyrannize over the Heart, level all their Engines against God's Existence, because this Truth curbs their Insolence; and if it does not correct their Irregularity, at least it abates their Violence.

Let therefore all the World, if you please, for many Ages deny the *Antipodes*, let them believe the *first Stars* are no bigger than the Flame of a Taper, or that the Moon equals the Sun; the very *Hypothesis* favours me; this universal Mistake assures me almost above Demonstration, that those who confess a God are not deluded: For for thousand Years the Senses have brought Negative Arguments against the Existence of a Divinity. Imagination has conjur'd up a hundred Difficulties, and thrown as many Prejudices in our way, the extream Wickedness of most Men has made *no God* their Interest, and it has conquer'd their Desires, and corrupted these Wishes: Yet in
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ight of Sense, in spite of Imagination; maugre all the Bribes of Sensuality, the Flattery of Appetite, and violence of Passions, that always raise Doubts in the face of Evidence, in the Presence of Demonstration, the belief of a God has stood unshaken, it has subdu'd the most obdurate, enlighten'd the most stupid, scar'd the most profligate, and overcome the most rebellious; all Nations, in all Ages, have acknowledged his Being; and even those who pretend to be Atheists cannot clear themselves of Doubts, their Fears are more certain than their Judgment, and they quake before the *Nothing* they laugh at.

Judge now whether the Belief of a God can be the effect of Prejudice, seeing it Wars upon the very Principles of Error, and maintain its Empire over the Judgments of Men, merely because no Prejudice can withstand it. I conclude therefore, this universal Consent, this harmonious Concord of Men in Customs different, opposite in Interest, and almost contrary the one to the other in Complexion, as well as Features, cannot proceed from any thing, but the Conviction of a Truth God breath'd into our Souls when he espous'd them to our Bodies, he twist'd it with our Nature, and so has secur'd it against the Assaults of Time, Custom, and Imagination, he has assur'd it against the false Intelligence of Sense, and the confounding Impression of Imagination: You may as soon debauch the Sun out of the Zodiac, as this indelible Truth out of your Heart, or dispute an *Ethiopian* white, as reason a God into a *Chymera*: No Armour is Proof against the Point of this Truth, there is no Shelter against the Force of this invincible argument. *Opinionum commenta delet dies. Naturæ jura confirmat.* Time wears out the Fiction of Opinion, and unmasks the Falsity of ill-founded Persuasions, but when it corroborates the Dictates, confirms the Judgments of Nature; and when a Notion has stood the trial of all Nations, and endur'd the Test of all Ages, is a Sign it springs from Nature, not from Caprice or illusion.

DIALOGUE XV.

From the universal Consent of Nations, it follows, that this Proposition, there is a GOD, can be no more doubtful than this, there was such a Man as Caesar.

Theom. YOU fancy, I suppose, I am come over to you, and turn'd a through-pac'd Convert; you have ply'd me sufficiently with Words, but not at all with Reasons.

Euseb. 'Tis easier to asperse Truth, than to confute it: When I began the Conference, if you remember, I engag'd my self to give you convincing Proofs of a God, but not Wit to understand them: I have done my Part, and if they make no Impression, you must accuse either your Incapacity or Obstinacy, not the Weakness of the Argument. A Man that has no Eyes, or shuts 'em, may grope in the Dark at Noon-day; and if he blunders into a Precipice, he must discharge the Sun, and lay his Misfortune on the Indisposition of the Organ, or the Folly of his own Will: I have discover'd Truth, and laid it as open as Demonstration will permit, now you very gravely tell me, you can't discern it; you may at the same Rate accuse *Euclid*, and turn his Demonstrations into Paralogisms; you may say *Pythagoras* has sham'd human Reason with his famous Discovery, and that he was too Liberal when he gave a *Hecatomb* for a Sophism. I tell you again, I have not assaulted your Judgment with Fallacy or Sophism, but with naked Truth: A Child may see it, and no Man of Reason can deny it; it's too evident to be overlook'd, and too strong to be withstood; you may as well doubt whether there was such a Prince as *Caesar*, as call in question the Being of a Deity.

Theo. Hold there: I no more doubt of *Caesar's* Being, than of my own; it's not in my Power to dissent from either.

Euseb. I suppose you make this publick Confession to avoid Singularity, or that some under-hand Design has a greater Stroak in your Confession, than Conviction,

Theo. No

Theo. Nothing but Evidence draws out the Confession; I cannot doubt when Demonstration assures me, and I must waver, if bare Conjectures support me.

Enseb. Pray, by which Proposition of Mathematicks do you demonstrate *Cæsar* was?

Theo. You are in a Vein of Bantering surely; past matters of Fact, neither require, nor are capable of Mathematical Proofs, they are not to be made out by *Sines*

Tangents, they stand on the Basis of Authority, and are only convey'd to our Knowledge by Tradition: Now suppose the joint Consent of all Men, and all Ages, is able to make any past Transaction credible.

Enseb. Your Arithmetick runs too high; what do you think of all Men? The tenth Part of Mankind has heard of *Cæsar*, than of *Domingo's* Voyage to the Moon: you send *Hue* and *Cry* after this great Conqueror into the Country, nine Parts of ten will take him sooner for Highway-man, than an Emperor, and rather suppose he had taken a Purse, than conquer'd the World: Other Countries of *Europe* are as little acquainted with this Hero as ours: He is absolutely lost to *China* and *Japan*; his Feats never swam over into *America*, and his Obscurity even in *Asia* and *Africa* is far greater than his Reputation; his Memory is only confin'd to Books, it lives among Pedants and School-Boys.

Theo. 'Tis true; but the Tradition, tho' not physically universal, is morally so; and this suffices to make the fact certain.

Enseb. Nay, Sir! I am absolutely for you, and did you not believe there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, I should persuade you to turn *Anchorite*, to take up in Forests, and forswear all human Society; for in Reality, you would be as ill rigg'd out for Conversation as *Buffloes* or *Lizzards*; but then if upon less Grounds you believe there has been such a Man as *Cæsar*, why do you refuse to believe a God upon greater?

Theo. What? Do you pretend the Motives that prove God are more cogent, than those that prove *Cæsar* has been?

Enseb. I do: For not a tenth Part of the World has ever heard of *Cæsar*, and every Man from the first Origin of Things, I say, every Man that has been able to discourse, to link together Antecedents and Consequences, has

has confess'd there is a supream Being ; so that if we appeal to Number, and put the Issue of the Controversy to Vote, the Being of a God carries the Day : As there is no Proportion between the Authority that stands for *Cesar*, and that which stands for God, so there can be no Comparison between the Certainty of one, and of the other.

Besides, those who attest *Cesar has been*, had no Interest to deny it ; they got no more by his Being, than by his not Being ; the one did not advance their Fortune, nor the other recoil it : But a considerable Part of those who avouch for a God, were interested in his *not Being*, they were Men sunk in Lewdness, and lost in Debauchery, their Hands were dyed in Blood, Rapine, and Sacrilege, and their Hearts defil'd with the most crying Abominations ; they wish'd there were no God, because they liv'd as if there were none ; their Interest voted him down, yet their Judgments could not. The Rack of their wounded Consciences told them, there was a God ; and though they apprehended his Justice, they had not the Boldness to disown it : If therefore those Men deserve more Credit who speak against their own Interests, than those who do not, this single Circumstance makes the Being of a God more certain, than that of *Cesar*.

Theo. There is *Excedens* and *Excessum* ; if we go to Polling, you may perchance gain the Suit, but if to Evidence, the Cause is mine. The Authority of a few built on Evidence, weighs ten Times more than the Authority of many destitute of Reason. Thus the Case stands between you and me ; more Witness for God, than for *Cesar*, but then the Authority of those who maintain a God, is supported by Fancy alone and Caprice.

Enseb. That is, all Men espoused the Belief of a God without Reason. What ? Can a Man affirm such an amazing Impossibility, and boggle at any Thing ? A wise Man may sometimes be impos'd on by subtle Appearances, he may grasp a Shadow for the Substance, and take counterfeit Reason, as well as adulterate Coin : But to say all Mankind took up the Belief of a God on a Frolick, without Reason, nay, against the Interest of the greater Part, is to suppose them struck at a clap with the Spirit of Folly and Madness ; 'tis to suppose them

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irrational, and by Inference, not Men; and what can Fancy frame more prodigious, than that a Man of Parts should believe this Epidemical Lunacy without any Ground or Reason. If *Caprice* has sent about this Frolick: if it has posted it away to every Corner of the habitable World; methinks we have right to expect it may play little Pranks in things of another Nature. Why have the Gentry never yet flung *Tenxbury Mustard Balls* into their own Houses, and tofs'd the Frenzy thro' the whole Nation? Why have they never conspir'd the Ruin of Vintners by withdrawing their Custom, or suppress'd the Inns of Court by composing Law Suits *a l' amiable*? Could we see Affociations carry on these petty Frolicks, we might perchance have some Inclination to think more Universal were possible, but till you give me an Instance, you must pardon my Incredulity.

Now 'tis Time to take into consideration your pretended Advantage: The Proofs for *Cæsar's Being* are resolv'd, say you, into the Evidence of Sense, those for God's Existency are not, therefore the Authority that stands for *Cæsar*, exceeds that which stands for God, in the same Proportion that Certitude drawn from the Perceptions of Sense, surpasses the Certitude taken from any other Faculty.

First, Supposing the Evidence which stands for *Cæsar* be greater, 'tis false *Logick* to conclude that the Evidence of a God, grounded on the most universal Consent that ever was in the World, is insufficient to secure a wise Man from Doubt: For certainly something below supream Evidence will suffice; and if you will not grant me this, it evidently follows, you can be sure of nothing but what you see; for the Experience of your own Eyes is ten times more convincing than that of another, let it be apply'd to you by the most full Authority than can be imagin'd.

Secondly, You cannot refuse your Assent to the Existence of a God, upon Account that the universal Authority of Mankind is not founded on Sensation: For then you undermine and blow up the Foundation of *Atheism*, and *Apostate* from Incredulity; for either you are an *Epikurean*, or *Aristotelian* Atheist, *id est*, you believe the World was compos'd by Chance of Atoms, or was *ab æterno*: Take which you please; if the first, pray tell me,

me, did you ever see those *Atoms*? Did you ever view their Motion? Was you present when they danc'd the Hay? Or produc'd the World by a Turn of *Barnaby*? Did at least either *Epicurus* or *Democritus* assure their Scholars they saw this Scuffle? Can they tell us the Names of their Generals? The Number of their Squadrons? Or Battallions? How long the Conflict lasted? And upon what Articles the Peace was agreed on? If the Second, I desire to know what ocular Certainty you have of the World's Eternity; could any Man be present at this strange Production before he was, *id est*, could he exist before Eternity? These Things go down with *Atheists* without chewing, without *examen*; they believe 'em, tho' no Body ever saw 'em, and what is yet more admirable, without any Authority to recommend them, nay, in Spight of Authority, and against the most evident Conviction of Reason; but when the Question is to believe a God upon the universal Consent of all Nations, back'd with all the Force of Reason, they beg our Pardon, they cannot captivate their Understanding to the Belief of a thing that has never been seen? Is this to build on *Principles*? Yet, without doubt; you treat *Principles* as the Presbyterians did the Government in *Forty-Two*, who pretended to settle it on a stable Bottom, yet fairly overturn'd it.

Thirdly, Did you not tell me, you requir'd such Proofs only for a God as the Matter was capable of? That he must be a Fool or a Madman, that would not believe there was such a Place as *Constantinople*, unless it could be demonstrated by Mathematicks? Or deny'd a God because he did not see him? For to believe the Being of *Constantinople* upon no other Terms than *Demonstration*, or of God upon no Evidence but that of Sense, is to require a Conviction not possible; for God cannot be seen by a Corporal Eye, nor can the Being of *Constantinople* be evidenc'd by *Euclid*: So that the Authority for a God cannot be enervated, because it is not resolv'd into Sense: For suppose he did exist, and strived to manifest himself to Mankind, he never could expose his Essence to the Eye; so that you must either say such a corporal Testimony is not necessary for a through Conviction of his Being, or that his Omnipotency cannot sufficiently manifest it; take which you will; that cuts off your Re-

treat, and this plunges you into the Abyſs of Abſurdity and Blaſphemy.

Fourthly, Though *Cæſar* was the Object of Senſe, this Circumſtance cannot poſſibly have any Influence on your Belief: This ſtands merely on the Baſis of Authority; for if I ask you, why you believe there was ſuch a Man as *Cæſar*? You muſt Answer, becauſe *Tully* and others liv'd and convers'd with him: If I enquire farther how you know they liv'd and convers'd with him? You muſt reply, becauſe they ſay ſo in their Writings: So that the ultimate Motive of your Belief, is their Authority, partly deriv'd to you by their Books, partly by the concurring Teſtimony of intervening Ages; and this will appear more palpably, if we ſuppoſe *Tully* and the reſt of thoſe Authors, who tell us they were particularly acquainted with *Cæſar*, in Reality never knew him, and ſo impoſ'd on the next Age, which propagated the Cheat by a continual Tradition down to our Days: For ſtill in this *Hypotheſis* you would believe there was ſuch a Man as *Cæſar*. Why? Becaue you have the ſame Authority, ſo that their ſeeing *Cæſar*, or not ſeeing him, has no Influence on your Aſcent, their Word and Credit alone ſways your Judgment.

But, *Laſtly*, I ſay that God hath been both ſeen and heard, as much as a Spirit can poſſibly be of thoſe Senſes, and ſo the Authority of a God is not only of a farther Extent than that for *Cæſar*, but it alſo leans on Reason, and what makes moſt for our preſent Purpoſe, on the Evidence and Conviction of Senſe.

Theo. This indeed is a hardy Undertaking, and worthy of ſuch a *Hero*; if you bring it to a happy Concluſion, you will undermine *Atheiſm*, or at leaſt confound it: But I doubt of the Succeſs, and I fear your Enterprize will vaniſh into Miſcarriage.

Euseb. For all that, Sir, I do not deſpond: Your prophetic Enthuſiaſm will prove in the End as fallible as your Reaſons, and you will be as much out of your Prognofication, as your Philoſophy.

I will not here inſiſt upon all the Appearances God has been pleas'd to make in this World, ſince he created it: I ſingle out one, which Infidelity it ſelf muſt believe: 'Tis recorded in the 19th Chapter of *Exodus*, and happen'd three Months after that miraculous Delivery of the

Children of *Israel* from the Servitude of the *Egyptians*. I do not pretend to impose this Book on your Belief, as the Word of God; you might then perchance accuse me of your own Faults, and say I only prove the *Theft* by begging the Question in Debate: Take it as a Story, and fling it not among the Fables, till you have prov'd it one.

When the Host of *Israel*, says *Moses*, came into the Desert of *Sina*, it encamp'd in the same place, just against the Mountain; then God commanded *Moses* to tell the People, that within three Days he would descend upon the Mountain, and talk to the Army: The third Day the Clouds began to gather, Thunder roar'd, Lightning flash'd, and a celestial Trumpet struck all the Army with Fear and Amazement; then God came down in the Shape of Fire, and the whole Mountain open'd a Scene of Terror; the Army trembled, and all the *Jews* sunk under the awing Majesty of their Creator; they heard his Voice, they saw the Flames that environ'd him, they were both dazled and frightened with his Glory, and so deputed *Moses* to know his Will, and to receive his Commands: He took his Brother *Aaron*, and Seventy-two others, who all saw the God of *Israel*; he trod on a footstool compos'd of Sapphyrs like a serene Sky. This is in substance the Narration of *Moses*, and the Circumstances of this glorious Apparition: It could not be a Trick of State to fright the *Mobile* into Obedience, no subtle Invention contriv'd in a Closet, or resolv'd on at a Counsel-Table: here was no acting under Board, or out of Sight, three Millions of Men were Spectators, and that they might not afterwards take it for a Dream, or suspect it for Illusion, it continu'd many Days; so that they had time for Examen and Criticism.

Now I argue thus: There was, you say, such a Man as *Cæsar*, and you believe it, because that Tradition, which conveys down to you this Truth, is resolv'd into Sense, which cannot be deceiv'd; but a more universal Tradition conveys down to us the Being of a God, and this may be also resolv'd into Sense; therefore the Authority for a God is greater than that for *Cæsar*; therefore if upon Authority resolv'd into Sense, you believe there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, upon a more universal Authority resolv'd also into Sense, you may and ought to believe there is a God.

Theo.

Theo. I suppose, if there be a God, he is neither Smoak nor Fire; if then those old Gentlemen saw Smoak and Fire only, they could not see God; nay, he is neither made of Sapphyrs, nor falls under Shape or Figure.

Euseb. What does this Answer prove, but that *Atheists* use their Reason to abuse it? You cry out for Evidence of Sense, I send you to *Moses* for Satisfaction, you read a Piece of the 19th Chapter, shut the Book, and then with great Coolness tell me, the *Israelites* saw not God, but Fire and Smoak; and 'tis true; but God was under that Fire and Smoak; he has no Organs, yet fram'd a Voice; and how will you have him manifest himself to Sense, but by something that lies within the Sphere of Sense? Alas, Sir, a Spirit is too thin to entertain our Eyes or Ears, 'tis remov'd out of their Ken; the one fastens on Colours, and the other on Sound, and both bring us Intelligence from Matter: If such Evidence will not satisfy you, all I can say is, *Atheists* are a stubborn Generation, and nothing but Hell-Fire will render them supple; we may pray for them indeed, but cannot hope to convert them.

But, Sir, those Gentlemen who convers'd with *Cæsar*, what did they see?

Theo. What should they see but *Cæsar*.

Euseb. Was *Cæsar* a Substance, or a Complex of Accidents?

Theo. You have left the Pulpit to sit in the Chair of the Scorners, because you cannot reason me into an Impertinence, you will try to laugh me into one. Well, *Cæsar* was a Substance, as we are.

Euseb. I suppose he was neither Colour nor Sound.

Theo. That is certain.

Euseb. And pray what have you ever seen, but Colour? Or what have you ever heard, but Sound? By your own Confession, therefore, *Cæsar* has neither been seen or heard: So that we are still upon pretty equal Terms. I do not say this Comparison runs on all Four, there may be found some Disparity, but it will not invalidate the Retortion: For I find no Difference, but that those Accidents *Cæsar* appear'd under, were natural to him, whereas those that invested the Divinity were not.

Theo. Pray satisfy a Doubt or two; the Story is stale, and being toss'd about three thousand Years, probably

lost nothing. Again, this strange Passage might be foisted into the Text by a crafty *Rabbi*; and in Time, what Assurance have you the Fact is true.

Enseb. First, *The Story is ancient*; true: But then Antiquity and Truth are not I hope incompatible; though Pictures may misrepresent by Nearness or Distance, History has no such nice Point as *Prospective*: If it had, *Atheism* would lie under no favourable Circumstances, it would have no Play for it self, no, not the Skirmish of Atoms, or the World's eternal Duration: For, without Doubt, the Battle between these invisible Legions was fought before *Moses's* Days; and then 'tis pretty clear, Eternity is of a staler Date than *Exodus*: If therefore the Antiquity of the Story startles your Belief, the Relation of the World's Beginning by the fortuitous Coition of Atoms, or its independent Existence from Eternity puzzles mine: 'Tis ridiculous and unreasonable to except against a Fact or Book, merely because they are ancient; for if the Exception be receivable, you must sling up all Right to your *Cesar*, we must shake Hands with *Livy*, giving up *Plutarch*, and confine our Reading, as well as Credit, to new *Almanacks* or *Gazettes*.

Again, a Fact that has brav'd Time, that has stood the Criticism of four thousand Years, and triumph'd over all the Examens of intervening Ages, carries a certain Air of Truth that makes Impression on the most obdurate Understanding; whereas upstart Facts are rather examin'd by Passion than Reason, they are maintain'd and deny'd by opposite Interests; both sides raise a Dust, and then in the Dark 'tis hard to distinguish Truth from Falsehood. The very Story I mention'd has sharpened the Pens, and exercis'd the Wits of all Ages; all those Pagan Philosophers that entred the Lists against Christianity, first struck at the *Pentateuch*, they aim'd at the Jewish Law to wound that of *Jesus Christ*; but their Attempts were baulk'd, they fell in the Enterprize; and when they could not disprove the Fact, they blacken'd it, and ascribed that to the Power of Magick, what could only be the Effect of the Omnipotent. You have the Liberty to steer by their Example, you may father this Apparition on the Devil, but then what will you gain but Confusion? For if you admit a Devil directly, you grant a God by Illation; a Devil and a God are in a Manner *Correlatives*.

To the second ; if this Apparition might be foisted in by a crafty *Rabbi*, by the same Reason all those Passages in ancient Authors, where *Cæsar* is mention'd, might have been foisted in also ; so that if a bare Possibility has Force against me, it has as much against you : Besides, if we consider the Care the Jews took to avoid such Surprizes, we may be morally assur'd, no Corruption, no Alteration could possibly be contriv'd : Twelve Copies were taken for the Twelve Tribes, then every Tribe drew as many more, as there were particular Synagogues in each Tribe, nor was this Task committed to the Care of private Copies, but to Notaries, Scribes, and Overseers appointed by publick Authority ; when every Copy was review'd by the whole Congregation, 'twas laid up in the Treasury of the Temple, under divers Locks, nor was it lawful for any without Commission to touch them : Besides, to obviate Falsifications, the Laws of the Land punish'd with present Death those who should dare to add or diminish, alter or corrupt the sacred Text : What can secure a Book more against Corruption, than so great a Circumspection, so great a Caution ? Or can you prove that any profane Historian was fenced so strongly against the Assaults of Time ? Or the Mistakes of Ignorance or Malice ?

To the third ; I have all the Assurance the Fact is true, as the thing is capable of, without a special Revelation : It was not acted in Darkness, but in the sight of three Millions of Men : This Spectacle mixt with Terror and Majesty, did not flash by, like a Lightning, but continued many Days ; so that the People laid not under a surprise, but had time to call all things to a cool Examination : Again, this Apparition mov'd them to receive a Law clog'd with Ceremonies, and fill'd with Precepts ; We may easily suspect the Presence of their Master rather forc'd them to accept it, than their Inclination, and that they submitted to the Yoak with Regret, because they cast it off in a Moment. Now what three Millions saw and heard, *Moses* committed to Writing ; then he read the whole Law to the People, who swore to obey it : From these Spectators partly by written Tradition, and partly by Oral, we have receiv'd the Fact ; some have defended the Truth of the whole Book with their Blood, and the most learned Men of the World with

their Pens. What greater Proof can, not Reason only, but Obstinacy require? Compare the Certainty you have of *Cæsar*, with the Evidence I have brought for this, and you will find it inferior: Three Millions saw God and heard him, not half that Number had a Sight of *Cæsar*, in all Probability, and as few ever heard his Voice: The Authority for the one, is at least as great, as that for the other: No Man had any Interest to deny *Cæsar*, a thousand to deny the Books of *Moses*; that have endeavour'd to suppress, and confute them. Emperors have pointed the *Pagan* Arguments with Swords, Racks, and the Horror of most cruel Torments, yet Christians without Number, have rather expos'd their Bodies to the Flames, than those Books to the Fury of Executioners, they chose rather to lose their Lives, than deny those Truths they contain'd: Now must not those People be pretty sure who prove Truths with their Blood? Who defend Facts, not with a Syllogism, but the Torture? And press home their Arguments with Suffering? This way of Disputepurchase may not agree with your Temper, and (I believe) you would rather deliver up your *Cæsar*, than hang for him; but however, you may measure the Value other Men put on their Lives, by the Price you rate your own at, and you may conclude, they would never part with them without good Reason, and an urgent Necessity: In fine, we may safely presume, the Fact is true, because all Antiquity has thought so; and 'tis Madness to oppose our Passion, or reason against the Reason of the Christian World.

Theo. You grant some have question'd those Books, and by consequence the Fact in Controversy; but no Body has been so abandon'd of common Sense, as to start a Doubt about the Being of *Cæsar*; therefore if a Fact never question'd be more certain than one that has been controverted, in spite of all your Arguments, 'tis more certain there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, than that God appear'd to the People of *Israel*.

Euseb. The questioning the Fact does not take off from its Certainty; unless the Motives on which it stands be found doubtful and weak upon Trial. Is the Possibility of Motion less certain, because *Zeno* deny'd it? Is this Principle, *Quid libet est vel non est*, less evident, because some doting Philosophers abjur'd it? Are you tempted to

say Snow is black, because a Fool affirm'd it? No, Sir: In spight of those silly Coxcombs, these things stand still upon their ancient Bottom; and will, till Men pull out their Eyes, or turn off their Reason. If the Being of *Cæsar* has never been brought to examen; 'tis because Mankind has no interest in him: Whether he was, or was not, brings no alteration into the World: Things go on after the same Method in either Hypothesis; and though indeed he made some Figure eighteen hundred Years ago, he makes none at present, but on the Stage: But should a Gentleman put in Claim to some Estate in Vertue of a Grant from *Julius Cæsar*, our Lawyers would not only plead Prescription against it, but prove by the Statutes even of *William the Third*, his famous Expedition into *Britanny*, was the pure Invention of *Recusants*, Enemies to the Government; nay, that the very Person is Fiction, Imposture, and Design. 'Tis more certain there was such a Man as *Cæsar*, than that God appear'd to the People of *Israel*.

A Gentleman in some disorder fetching up a great Sigh: Alas, Sir, said he to *Eusebius*! What do you mean? Why raise you Ghosts from the other World to haunt poor Creatures, and have no Power to conjure them down? Must our Torment make up your Diversion? Can't you be pleas'd unless we are frighted? Nor at ease unless we groan upon the Torture? The most happy Life deserves rather Pity than Envy: And what we can procure by a thousand Cares, is only to render our selves less miserable? Why then do Divines continually importune us with strange Discoveries of another World? Why damp they our Pleasure with Stories of Hell? And terrify our Imagination with ghastly Landskips of a tormenting Eternity? Either prove these amazing Tenets so clearly that we cannot deny them, or promise Silence that we may not hear them. Your Arguments raise Doubts, but cannot quell them; they alarm my Fears, but have not the Power to dissipate them.

Alas! Sir, (reply'd *Eusebius*) what would the Silence of Divines avail, unless you could gag Nature, and silence your Conscience? Tho' you flie from the Commerce of Men: Tho' you mew your self up in Rocks and Dens; the very Stones proclaim his Being: The Winds whisper it; and Solitude protests you are within God's

Dominion. *Omnes homines vident Deum*; the very Blind see him; and the Deaf hear him.

'Tis strange (answered the Gentleman) that so many flashing Wits in the Court and Town, should overlook so long this Divinity, which stands before them. Must they put out their Eyes to see him? Or turn Fools to find him?

I doubt not (said *Eusebius*) but *White-Hall* and *Kensington* are well stock'd with Wits. I grant the Town is not unprovided: But then I maintain their Blindness proves a God; and that Infidelity is a just Punishment of their Crimes. For make a Survey of all those Wits, and you will find them not only without Grace, but almost without Conscience. So soon as their Reason bloom'd, they prostituted their Innocence, and shew'd they were Men by acting like Devils. As *Alexander* counted the Battles he fought by the Wounds he receiv'd; so these may calculate up the Moments of their Lives by the Enormities they commit. Every Action affronts Nature, and cries aloud for Vengeance. If therefore there be an Author of Nature, is it not just he should take the Cause of Nature in Hand, and revenge the Injury on those that did it? And what more terrible Revenge can he take, than to strike those blasphemous *Salmoneans*; those impure *Sardanapalus's* as he did the *Sodomites*, with the Spirit of Blindness? *Percussit eos cæcitate à minimo usque ad maximum*: Then to withdraw the Light of his divine Face from their Eyes; and so to permit them to walk in Darkness and Ignorance; and then only to acknowledge their Errors, when they feel the Punishment of their Crimes?

Now that their Infidelity cannot proceed either from want of Motives, or of Wit, 'tis pretty evident. They have the Consent of Mankind, *id est*, of Nature: They have their Confession of their Consciences from within, the Testimony of every Creature from without. These glare such a Light on the most stupid Understanding, that they cannot resist the Force of the Impression. Your *First-rate* Wits of the Court examine (you say) all those Arguments; they contemplate the great World, and the less, they turn up every Stone, ransack every corner of the Universe, without being able to discover any Traces of a Deity. What can you infer? But that there is a God
above,

above, who takes an Inventory of the Actions of the Children of Men, who punishes their Rapines, their Impurities and Blasphemies *here* by confounding their Judgments, who cast such a Gloom over their Understandings, that they can't see what Children discern; that they grope in Darkness, whilst they walk in Light, and call out for Proofs of his Being, whilst they are surrounded, and almost oppress'd with Demonstrations. In a Word, Sir, do not conclude there is no God, because the topping Genius's of the Court do not see him; say rather there is one, because they do not see what all the World both civiliz'd and unciviliz'd, see and adore; say their Ignorance is a just Punishment of their scandalous and provoking Offences, and that the only way left these abandoned Debauchees to come to the Knowledge of a God, is to take off the Curse by flying to Repentance.

He was going on, but *Theomachus* interrupted him; 'tis time (said he) to sound a Retreat, we have been this Morning on hot Service; after some Civilities, *Eusebius* left the Company, and the next Day took up again the Conference, which continu'd some Days.

DIALOGUE XVI.

The second Proof drawn from the Existence of the World, which by unquestionable Authority is shown to have been made.

Euseb. I Have prov'd the Existence of a God, from the innate Characters of his Being, stamp'd on the Hearts of Men. I come now to a second Proof, which he has laid before our Eyes, that he might convince our Senses, as well as our Reason, and manifest himself by his Works to the incredulous, seeing he cannot appear in Person. We see a most stately Fabrick call'd the World, vast in Extent, and admirable for Beauty: The Earth is stock'd with innumerable Beasts, the Air with Birds, the Sea with Fishes, some seem made merely for Man's Profit, others for his Pleasure, and many for Ostentation. The Firmament glitters with a Thousand Luminaries, their Bulk vies with their Lustre, and their Beauty with both;

both : The Sun dazzles us with his Glory, and over-powers our feeble Eyes with an Excess of Majesty ; it's the grand Arbitrator of Time ; it divides Moments into Ages, Years, Months and Days ; it regulates Seasons, prescribes bounds to Winter, and limits to Summer, and by its Access and Recess makes 'em. The Moon with her bright Legions of Stars, that spangle the Firmaments, gilds Darkeness, and silvers over those Shades of Horror, and so turns Night it self into a Theatre of Pleasure : But what raises my Amazement is, that this gigantick Machine is compos'd of almost infinite Parts ; yet all are so artificially contriv'd, that one fits exactly the other ; nay, they are endow'd with contrary Inclinations, they are always at variance, they draw into the Field one against the other, yet those particular Fewds hinder not an universal Peace, nor those private Discords a general Harmony. Now, Sir, I ask you from whence this glorious Peace of Architecture came ? Who laid the Foundations of the Earth ? Who rais'd the towring Mountains ? And hung those vast resplendent Bodies of the Sun, Moon and Stars in those liquid Regions above ? Who azur'd the Firmament ? Who enamel'd the Meadows with a thousand different Flowers, that embalm the Air, ravish the Sky, and perfume the Smell ?

Theo. Indeed the World is a lovely Fabrick, and the Contrivance seems admirable, so that some have father'd the Work upon an infinite Wisdom : I confess this Opinion is more plausible than true ; it goes down with the unthinking Vulgar, yet Men who hate to take things upon trust, who stick not on outward Appearances, but follow Effects up to their Origin, are of a different Sentiment.

Some say it caus'd it self ; but, methinks, this is a Piece of the rudest Nonsense that ever was invented, it makes a thing act before it was ; and gives a Being before it had any : Nay, it supposes a thing to be, and not to be, the same Instant ; and so allows of a Contradiction, which is to out-shoot Absurdity it self.

Others are inclin'd to *Epicurus's* and *Democritus's* System ; these say the Matter is Eternal, which having an infinite Space to support in, began to scower about, and after a Thousand Encounters by a most happy Casualty chop'd upon this regular Frame : Indeed a Man must be

of a very credulous Complexion, that can swallow this Folly; 'tis to lose time to enter upon a Confutation: Methinks, sometimes we might see Books compos'd by Chance, as well as this great *Folio* of the World; and Pictures also may start up by sprinkling the Colours at random.

Others, in fine, maintain the World is Eternal, *à se*, without any other Cause but its own Nature; 'tis a necessary Being, and independent; and as it had no Beginning, so it can never have an End: 'Tis in vain to run after a Cause distinct from its own Nature, it is its own Architect and Work, the one is the same with the other. To these Philosophers I give my Approbation, this is my Sentiment; you have Liberty to bring your Exceptions against it.

Enseb. I say the World was made in Time, an infinite Being drew it out of the State of pure Possibility, and plac'd it in that of Actuality: His Power stretch'd out the Heavens, and spread a Canopy of Azure, embroidered with Stars, over the Earth: Wisdom contriv'd the Parts, and with a stupendious Artifice put them together: His Goodness prompted him to communicate himself to a Multitude of Creatures: His Prudence mark'd out the Employment of every Part of the Creation; it assign'd them their Work, and appointed them their Stations. Supposing there was a God, this Account would be very reasonable, for this great Work would not exceed the Skill of the Workman. Infinite in Wisdom, Power, and Goodness.

Now the present Controversy can be decided only by two Ways; either by Authority or Reason. If therefore Authority stands by me, and not at all for you; if solid Reason takes my Side, and wholly abandons yours; and if besides you are not only deserted by Reason, but press'd by those very Difficulties, or greater you oppugn me with, I hope you will be so just to Reason and your self, as to come over to Truth, and to confess and adore that God you now deny. Let me therefore ask you, is your own Opinion back'd with Authority?

Theo. I confess the Authority is not full nor cogent, yet all Ages have furnish'd Men, who stood up for the World's Eternity: Neither indeed ought we to put the Issue of the Cause upon Authority, in such an endless

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Series of Ages, many unforeseen and unavoidable Accidents may easily have interrupted the Course of Tradition, as Plagues and Inundations, which, without doubt, have more than once almost depeopled the World, and turn'd it into a Solitude: Besides, want of Tradition for the World's Eternity rather proves it was Eternal than not: For if the World was always peopled, there could be no common Spring from whence the Tradition should first rise, and then spread over the Universe.

Euseb. I grant the World's Eternity may have found Abettors in most Ages, but their Authority is insufficient; there were a certain kind of Fanatick Philosophers, like our Atheists, who liv'd on Fancy, and open'd by Imagination; they examin'd Facts by Caprice, and founded their Tenets on mere Conjectures, but yet their Opinion favours not yours. For though *Aristotle* was a great stickler for the World's Eternity, and, as he confesses, the first of all Philosophers that broach'd the Whim; yet he acknowledges it was made by God, and flow'd from his Power, as Light from the Sun; yet this *Hypothesis* seem'd so opposite to the receiv'd Opinion of all *Greece*, that an Action of Blasphemy was brought in against him, *Conimb. l. 8. Physic. c. 2. Quod unum Deum docuisset contra Patrios ritus de Idolis & multitudine Deorum, & quod Mundum sempiternum enunciasset, quem initio Temporis conditum tota Græcia putabat*: And the Epicureans who held the Matter Eternal, thought it far more consonant to Reason, to leave the rare Contrivance and Disposition of the World to Chance, which finish'd and put the last Hand to this admirable Architecture in Time, than to ascribe its Origin to any inherent Independency,

*Si nulla fuit Genitalis Origo
Terrarum & Cæli, semperq; æterna fuere,
Cur supra bellum Thebanum & funera Trojæ
Non alias alii quoq; res cecinere Poetæ.*

Thus an Epicurean Poet.

and I think I may defy you to produce one ancient Philosopher, one Man of Sense that ever durst take upon him the Defence of your *Thesis*; and yet we scarce find any other Absurdity without an Advocate, but to clap Independency on a Being, whose Perfections are confin'd, seems

too monstrous an Enterprize to wise Men, so contrary to the first Principles of Reason, that they durst not undertake it. You do therefore well to put your Cause upon Reason, for you must lose it, if you stand to the Verdict of Tradition: Indeed, as you say, if the World had been Eternal, the Memory of its Eternity might have been buried in such an endless Series of Revolutions and Successors; but what does this prove? Only what might have happen'd, not what really is to come to pass.

What you say is true, viz. that if the World was always peopled, there could not possibly be any common Spring from whence the Tradition should first rise, and therefore no Tradition for the World's Eternity can be expected; this, I say, though suppos'd true, can avail you nothing against a positive Tradition that the World was made and had a Beginning.

Theo. And how do you make it out?

Enseb. As past Matters of Fact are made out, viz. by History: And in the first Place *Aristotle* quoted above, does acknowledge that the most ancient Writers held the World was made, and that Tradition did confirm People in the Persuasion, that God made all things: The *Scythians* and *Egyptians* were of this Opinion, the *Indians* and *Phœnicians* concurr'd with them, to say nothing of the *Græcians* who look'd upon the contrary Opinion as Innovation, nay, and a kind of Heresy or Blasphemy.

And if we take a turn into *America*, if we enter the Forests and Wilderesses of this vast Region, we shall find the *Peruvians* and other *Barbarians* of this Sentiment; indeed some had very extravagant Notions of the Creation, but what can be expected from Men half turn'd Beasts, but Extravagance; yet they concurr'd with us in this, that God fram'd and modelled the World.

Secondly, The first Historian, and as *Authenick* as ever writ, gives a long Account of the World's Beginning in *Genesis*. I do not intend to put this Book upon you as divinely Inspir'd, give it but the Credit of a *History*; this I only ask, and this you cannot refuse with Justice, seeing he has been esteem'd by the *Jews* and *Christians*, not only as a Divine Historian and Legislator, but also as a *Prophet*.

Now

Now supposing the World was created, 'tis natural to think the first Man would leave his Children, and those to their Posterity a Tradition of so remarkable a Transaction; nor could this Conveyance be hard, especially when in the World's Non-age, three Men alone, *Methusalem, Shem, and Isaac*, could carry on a Tradition from the World's Creation almost to the *Israelites* descent into *Egypt*.

Again, supposing such a Tradition; it might be expected the first Writers should put it on Record. Now, this has hapned; *Moses* the first Historiographer has descended to Particulars; and as his Narration is reasonable, so withal it carries a certain Simplicity that persuades. *Berosus, Orpheus, Homer, and Trismegistus* follow'd *Moses* in Age, as also in the Delivery of the World's Beginning: What they receiv'd from their Predecessors, they handed down to their Successors, and by this Means the Opinion that the World had a Beginning carries all before it: The whole Body of Christians believe it, the *Mahometans* and *Jews*, though they vary from us in other Points, agree with us in this; and all Nations whoever acknowledg'd a God, own he was the Contriver of this great Master-piece of Power and Wisdom.

Now to go against the Tide of Tradition, so Ancient, so Universal, and withal so Rational, upon no other Ground but mere Conjectures, or bare Possibilities, is Rashness to Excess, and the very Heighth of Folly; 'tis to prefer the Reason of one Man before that of all Mankind, to brand his whole Species with the Infamy of a fond Credulity, and to pass Judgment upon them, that they are thoroughly qualified for *Bedlam*.

But again, if so full a Report will not satisfy you, you must pen up your Knowledge in a narrow Part of the World, you must forswear not only all Acquaintance with past Actions, but even with remote; and what is worse, you must fall below that Station a Creature endued with Reason ought to keep: For when Reason gives me as great a Satisfaction about the Being, or not Being of a Fact, as Reason requires, 'tis Imprudence to doubt: And a Man must take Pleasure to fret and disoblige his Understanding, that will not acquiesce to such an Evidence. Now our present Controversy is a plain Matter of Fact: We have put it upon Witnesses: Anti-

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quity stands for me; and all Nations agree in the Main, though they vary in some Circumstances. To these concurrent Testimonies you oppose naked Surmises, or pure Possibilities; or else you *subpœna* a Brace or two of Atheists, or a Pack of *African* and *American* Brutes, who are scarce able to understand the very State of the Question, and know as little of past Transactions as of those that are to come. I now appeal to your own Judgment, whether a full Tradition be not as good a Conviction, that the World had a Beginning, as the Nature of a thing past requires? And whether your Counter-Witnesses, who depose on Conjecture, would byass an upright Judge in any Court of Judicature, against a Cloud of others Superior both in Wisdom and Probity.

Besides, I add another Circumstance very Material, and which deserves a little Reflection. If the World had been made in Time, by the Power and Wisdom of God, we could not expect a more full Tradition of its Beginning, than we have: Therefore on this very Account we have all the Reason to presume it had a Beginning. I prove it thus; *First*, It cannot be imagin'd, but some would stand up against it. Mens Judgments are as various as their Faces, and their Understandings seem no less bizar than their Humours. Some deny things, because every one believes them. They love Singularity in Opinions, as well as in Modes, and will no more endure a Rival in thinking, than in their Amours. Others are of a martial Complexion, they love to send their Brain upon Expeditions, and are temerarious enough to attack Demonstration. They follow Truth as Constables do Malefactors, to arrest it, and rail against it, as the young *Athenian* did against *Alcibiades*, because every one applauded him; they idolize Wit, but are ignorant of its Definition, and so, like Dray-men, place it in clashing and contradicting. Others steer their Judgments by the Compass of Interest: One would think their Understandings had truck'd Natures with the Will, and that it had remov'd its Lodgings from the Head to the Heart. Whatever flatters these Mens Vanity, or pampers their Inclinations, is always true; but if it frowns upon their Passions, or checks their Liberty, it must be false. Hence it comes that those Truths that even flash Conviction, and captivate Reason, the very Moment they are understood

stood, oftentimes find Opposition, and are stigmatiz'd with Fallacy, because too clear to be prov'd. One would think, *That the Part is less, than the Whole*, is pretty plain, and that a Man must have a slender Portion of Wit, not to conceive it; yet a late Mathematician call'd it in Question, degraded it from the Quality of a Principle, and threw it amongst the Fry of vulgar Errors. 'Tis impossible to frame a Proposition more clear than this, *It's impossible the same should both be, and not be at the same time.* Yet if we believe *Aristotle*, some Philosophers deny it: And that no Folly might want a Patron, as I have said already, *Zeno* would not admit Motion. Now if Men disbelieve first Principles, if they reject Truth when it appears in *disshabile*, and overlook it, when it stands before them; what Wonder they don't see it at a Distance, when it appears by Proxy, and is conveyed only to us by Tradition? If we will not credit our own Eyes, we may very well slight Authority, for certainly they are able to give a more exact Account of Things, than Tradition: They discover Truth in Person; we receive not their Intelligence at second Hand, but see Objects in their proper Colours, without Mask or Varnish. Though therefore the World was made, we could not expect (without a Miracle) a more universal Tradition, than we have of its Beginning.

Secondly, Nor ought the fabulous Opinions about the Creation to prejudice the Truth of the Fact; for supposing it true, those would have sprung necessarily from the gross Ignorance of Barbarians; when a Story has pass'd through two or three Hands, how unlike is it to the Original? Every one shapes it to his own Inclination: Some Circumstances are lost, others added; and nothing remains but the Essential: If a Truth be disguised in a Day; we must not wonder it suffers Alteration in the Space of six thousand Years, especially among those Nations who are ignorant of Letters, who are bred in Ignorance, and live in Brutality, who know no more of time past, than of foreign Countries, and take as little Pains to cultivate their Understanding, as their Soil.

Theo. But by your leave I could single you out some Traditions of a very ancient Date, and of far less Consequence, than the World's Creation, that pass Current without Opposition: For Example, who ever denied

there were such Men as *Alexander* or *Cæsar*? Now if the World had a Beginning, why should not the Memory of so wonderful a Fact remain as Universal as that of *Cæsar* or *Alexander*?

Euseb. First, If we went to polling, I believe those who stand for the World's Creation would carry it, for this is acknowledged by a hundred Nations that never heard of those two Princes.

Secondly, If none have endeavoured to out-face the World, that there never were such Men, 'tis because the Contest was too insignificant; and besides, which way should a Man set upon the Enterprize? He could expect no Relief from Reason. For alas! All the reason in the World can never shew they were, or were not: He could therefore only have Recourse to Tradition, and where could he find any Pretence to set on foot so much as an *innuendo* they never were? Unless he could hit upon an expedient to seize all the Records, that mention those Emperors, and then condemn them to the Fire: But it was the Interest of all Atheists to deny the World ever had a Beginning. Nay, 'twas absolutely impossible for them to admit Creation, and reject a Creator; and then that Principle, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, was a great Support, not only to Atheists, but Philosophers; and no doubt, if that Principle be true, the Matter at least may be Eternal. Here you see that Interest might move some, and apparent Reason others, to stand for the World's Eternity, but neither could invite a Man to question either *Alexander* or *Cæsar*.

To sum up therefore the Force of my Argument in short: I say, our Controversy must be tried either by Testimony or Reason, the first is the proper Court for pronouncing upon ancient Facts, and the most uncorrupt Tribunal. I have prov'd that the Torrent of Tradition runs for me, that the most ancient Writers, as well as the most recent; the most learn'd, as well as the most ignorant; the most polish'd Nations, with the most incult, are Witnesses for me. Whereas none but a Pack of Atheists, or some wild Barbarians, or at most a Brace of whimsical Philosophers, famous for Nothing but Singularity, are appear in your Defence. If such an Evidence be not sufficient to prove a Fact, pray tell me what is? If you require more, I must conclude you are unreasonable;

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because

because you call for a greater Conviction than the Subject will bear, or can be expected without Miracle; and I suppose Miracles would as little befriend your Cause as Tradition.

D I A L O G U E XVII.

The Atheist supposing the World's Eternity, supposes an infinite Series of Generations possible; now it being ten times more probable, that such a Series is impossible, he must be guilty of the highest Imprudence to venture his Soul upon such an Uncertainty.

THE World (you say) was Possible *ab aeterno à se*: Therefore it was *ab aeterno à se*. I affirm it was not Possible *ab aeterno à se*: Therefore it was not *ab aeterno à se*. Our Positions are contradictory; and so are our Proofs: For you barely assert and prove Nothing: And I will prove by Reason what I assert.

Theo. Before you proceed, let me desire you not to meddle with *Infinitem*. Though you raise a hundred Batteries against infinite Successions, you'll only go off with Labour and Disappointment. Your Philosophers have undertaken my Defence on that Side, and I know not how you'll storm their Reasons, or level their Authority. Yet till this be done, there's no coming at me. Therefore I counsel you not to raise your Battery on that Side.

Euseb. I confess the Pride of some Philosophers and the litigious Humours of others, have been kind to Atheists: For in Reality, Philosophy is no more a Science, but an Art of Jugling. Philosophers quest more after new Opinions than Truth: And he is the Man, (not that searches into the Bowels of Nature) but that dresses and tricks up Notions in the best Posture of Defence against Opposers; and if he can handsomely embroil a Question, or dares offer Words for a solid Answer, or impeach Truth of Sophistry, he deserves to be pointed at: *Digito monstrari & dicitur hic est.* Thus some have asserted the Possibility of an Infinity *actu*, in spite of received Principles that oppose it. They shroud the Weakness of their Reasons under the Obscurity of the Thesis; and solve

solve Difficulties by starting greater. You lay hold on their Vanity to support your *Hypothesis*, and think you have made it clear beyond Debate, by telling us Philosophers hold the Eternity of the World possible: But under Favour, tho' their Authority may stave off some Arguments from you, it cannot others: For though they hold God could create the World *ab aeterno*, they deny it could be *à se*. If therefore in one Case you defer something to their Authority, be so just as to reverence it in the other: Besides, your vast Pretenders to Wit will not be fobb'd off with Authority. This is the Refuge of Weakness; the Sanctuary of those, whose good Humour must compound for the Shallowness of their Brain. You are for Reason, for naked Demonstration, without Fard or *Fucus*: For Evidence, that admits of no Reply nor Rejoinder; therefore stand to your Principles before you strike in with these mighty Upholders of *Infinitem*. Bring their Reasons to the Touchstone: Examine whether they are Sterling, or Adulterate. I will only propose one or two Difficulties, which I confess put me to the Plunge. The World you say is Eternal?

Theo. I do.

Enseb. Therefore it was impossible for you ever to have been Born.

Theo. I deny the Inference.

Enseb. I prove it. You could not possibly be Born till an infinite Number of Generations was past: But 'tis impossible for an infinite Number of Generations to pass, therefore 'twas impossible for you ever to have been Born.

Theo. 'Tis impossible for an infinite Number of Generations to pass in an infinite Space of Time; I deny your *Minor*: In a finite Space of Time, I grant your *Minor*, and deny the Consequence.

Enseb. I subsume, but 'tis impossible for an infinite Space of Time ever to pass: For if it can pass, it has an End, and by consequence we find an infinite with an End; and certainly this consequence becomes not a Man, who avoids the Belief of a Deity, because Infinity is an inconceivable Thing. I know not how you look upon my Argument: But methinks any Man but an Atheist would start at it.

Again, if by Descent we may pass by an infinite Series of Generations ; why not by Ascent ; methinks 'tis no farther from the Bottom of a Pair of Stairs to the Top ; than from the Top to the Bottom : And I always thought the way from *London* to *Windsor*, was the same with that from *Windsor* to *London* : Now in Ascending from you to your Father, from him to your Grandfather, &c. we march in the same Road ; we call in at the same Gentlemen. If therefore by Descent we come to an end of our Journey, why not by Ascent ?

Theo. The Reason is evident : For by Ascending you come to an end of Generations ; and stop at the first Man : Then the Succession of Generations has not been Infinite.

Enseb. Right : But then it inevitably follows, there has not been an infinite Series of Generations : Because you put an end to them, they are at a full stop in your Person.

Theo. There is a great Disparity between the two Cases. Because when you mount up from Son to Father, from Father to Grandfather, &c. the Time is always Finite. Now what wonder that an Infinity of Generations can't be trac'd up to their Origin in a finite Space ? But when you descend to me, there has pass'd an infinite Space of Time : And so one Infinity corresponds to the other.

Enseb. No doubt, you have plain'd the Difficulty beyond Dispute by your quaint Disparity. But I would know why a Man by Ascending cannot step from Time to Eternity, as well as by Descending from Eternity into Time ? And then, how can an infinite Time pass ?

Theo. These Infinities and Eternities are puzzling Subjects, they out-stretch the Abilities of our Understandings, and your Argument presses those Philosophers who maintain God could create the World *ab aeterno*.

Enseb. Infinities and Eternities are puzzling Subjects indeed ; but then I wonder an Atheist's Reason should stumble at the Notion of an infinite Being, and leap so nimbly over apparent Contradictions. I do not insist upon my Proof as a Demonstration that there is a first Principle, or that the World was not *à se*. Perchance in a puzzling Subject our Understanding may be Non-plus'd ; but at least it demonstrates, that the whole Body

of Atheists is unreasonable to Folly and Madness; for they reject God on Account of his Infinity, and some other Attributes that (they say) are inconceivable. In the mean time, they are constrain'd to admit an Infinite and Eternal Series of Generations; a thing that not only Surpasses our Conception, but in Appearance falls foul on the most evident and receiv'd Maxims of Reason. If we must place Infinity and Eternity somewhere, I appeal to Reason, whether it be not more agreeable to its Dictates, to attribute those Perfections to a Being, in whose Notion they necessarily enter, and imply no other Difficulty, but what follows a finite Understanding, when it roves in Infinity, and loses it self in Eternity; than to this World, which in its most essential Notion, involves no Idea of Eternity: Nay, it cannot be apply'd to it, without violating either directly or by Illation, the very Principles of Discourse. Whence I conclude some more unworthy Principle than Reason induces Atheists to question the Existence of a God, because his most inconceivable Attributes return to their own Hypothesis with more Violence.

These Philosophers Case, who think God might have created the World *ab eterno*, is quite different from yours; tho' their Opinion be false, their Faith is true: So that at worst they risque nothing but their Labour; but you put all your Hopes on a weak Bottom: If my Arguments be true, your Soul is lost; and you will deplore your successive Eternity, *à parte ante*, which has an End for a whole Eternity, *à parte post*, which will have none. Lord! How would an Atheist crow? How would he chirp? If he could but anvil out a Proof so apparently conclusive for the World's Eternity, as mine is against it? We should see the Bookseller's Stalls in *Paul's Church-Yard* hung with new Demonstrations against the Existence of a God; as they were some Years ago with Demonstrations against a Trinity. We should see Copies in every Coffee-House, and the Beaus busy in conning it over, to make themselves Masters of it: But because the Proof does not hit with their Inclination, it must not work upon their Understanding. It falls as heavy upon our Philosophers (you say) as upon you; what then? Can Company change the Nature of Things? If they are in the Wrong, are you in the Right? Would you

engage your Estate or Life that my Argument is mere *Paralogism*? I believe you would take some time for Consideration before you venture upon the Bet. Why then do you stake your Soul? For if an eternal Succession of Generations be impossible, the World was made in Time. If it was made, there is a God; and if there be one, what can an Atheist expect from a slighted Deity, but a just Chastisement for his Infidelity? The Consequence is of Importance, and deserves some serious Thoughts.



DIALOGUE XVIII.

The third Proof. The Characters of Wisdom visible in the Frame and Constitution of the World, demonstrate it is the Work of a wise Agent.

I Have already prov'd a God by the bare Existence of the World: I confirm the same *Thesis* by the excellent Contrivance of it; which indeed is both amazing and ravishing: It can neither be expressed by Tongue, nor drawn out by Pencil. 'Tis above Art, and out of the Reach of Reason. The most searching *Genius* that ever was, has not been able to discover one Blot in the large *Volume* of the World: There are no *Errata's*. Nothing stept in as a rude Essay of Skill, and afterwards underwent the File or Hammer, but all Things continue as they were from the *Beginning of the Creation*.

From this Order and Regularity *Tully* infers, that the World was the Product of a wise *Agent*; and brands those with Folly, who dare deny a Conclusion so clear, so evident: *Esse præstantem aliquam æternamque naturam, eamque suspiciendam adorandamque pulchritudo mundi, ordoque rerum cælestium cogit confiteri*: The Beauty of the World, and exact Order of the Heavens demonstrate the Existence of a noble and eternal Being, to whom Men owe Esteem and Adoration; nay, he sticks not to affirm, that the Contemplation of the Oeconomy, Harmony, and Order of the heavenly Bodies, put the Matter in a Light, that leaves no room for Dispute. *Quid potest esse tam aper tum tamque perspicuum, cum cælum suspicimus cælestia-*
que

que contemplati sumus, quam aliquod esse numen præstantissima mentis, quo hæc regantur? What can be imagin'd more clear, than that there is a most wise Being, who directs and governs the Heavens?

Now that a Vein of Wisdom runs through every part of the World, is most evident; for it supposes two Things, a Design and Means proportion'd to acquire it: And were those two are found, Wisdom must be admitted. We have Eyes to see, and there are Colours capable of being seen. We have Organs fitted up for Smell, Taste, and Feeling, and there are Objects able to gratify them. Colours, Smells, &c. would be useless, were there no Senses to receive them; and Senses insignificant, if there was nothing in Nature to play upon them. This reciprocal Relation argues a Design, and a choice of Means; and who denies it to be the Contrivance of Wisdom, is slenderly provided with this Vertue.

The Sun, which is call'd the Father of Nature, as the Earth is term'd the Mother, moves about us in so just a Distance, that nothing could place it so conveniently but his Wisdom who assign'd its Task. Were it more remote, the Earth would congeal; did it approach, we should be parch'd with Heat, and fall into Ashes: But now we enjoy the Benefit of its Light; and the Earth the Effects of its enlivening Influence; it impregnates the Womb of Nature with its Rays, and attacks Vapours to pour them down in Dews and Showers, that refresh the Fields, enliven Flowers, and bring with them Plenty and Abundance; and at the same time returns those Waters to the Rivers and Sea, of whom it borrow'd them; and so (as it were) exercises at once, an Act of Liberality and Justice.

But then all those delicious Fruits that charm the Eye, and please the Palate, would rather be admirable than useful, did they not turn into the Substance of Animals; and those (like *Tantalus*) would perish of Hunger in the Arms of Plenty, had they no Instinct to feed on them. But again, had every Creature an Inclination to the same Food, one would starve the other: Nature would be at a *Nonplus* for Provision, her Granaries would be exhausted, her Stock drain'd, and then Mortality would follow: But now she keeps open Table for all her Children, she maintains them at her own Expences: And tho'

they neither Reap or Sow, they are rather overwhelm'd with Plenty, than press'd with Necessity: Besides, had not the *Male* an Inclination for the *Female*, the Species would be at an End: And this Inclination would not continue them, unless Propagation were made by it. Had the *Female* no Tendernefs for her Young, they could not hold out a Day; yet did not her Teats swell with Milk, her Tendernefs could not preserve them; but these poor Creatures forsaken by their Dam would be expos'd to Insult, were they destitute of Swiftnefs, Craft, Courage, or Arms to defend themselves, or annoy the Aggressors. Nature has provided against this Inconvenience: Flight saves some, Wiles others, and many dispute their Lives; and when they are over-power'd, they seldom fall without Revenge. They handle their Weapons with Art, and fence by Rule and Method. The *Porcupines*, like the *Parthians*, fight at a Distance; they shoot without Bows, or *Arquebuse*; and hit the Mark without aim. The *Hedge-Hog*, at the Approach of Danger, marshals it self into Sphere; it casts up a Retrenchment; expects the Enemy behind a *Palisade*, and supplies with Policy, the Weaknefs of its Forces. The Bull faces his Adversary. The Horse wheels off, and uses his Heels, either to fly, or to wound. If you intended to continue Creatures, could you invent more fit, more apt Means? Were you Commissary-General, could you lay up better Provisions? Are you able to place their Weapons more advantageously for their Defence? Or teach them to manage them with greater Dexterity? There are more legible Characters of Wisdom and Foresight in the Republick of Beasts, than in those of *Lycurgus*, *Solon*, *Plato*, and *Aristotle*; for these intended a perfect Commonwealth, they err'd most shamefully in the Means, and enacted Laws more suitable to Goats than Men. But among irrational Creatures, as these Laws are inviolable, so they are proportioned to their Natures and Welfare. They neither err by Excess nor Defect, one more Rule would subvert Oeconomy, as well as one less; nothing can be added, nothing subtracted.

I shall not enter upon the Fabrick of their Bodies, where Wisdom sits on every Muscle. Let it suffice that *Galen* takes Notice in his Book *de Forma fœtus*, that in human Bodies there are above 600 Muscles; and that every

every one requires at least ten Qualifications. So that about these small Parts alone, no less than 6000 Ends are to be attended to. There are 284 Bones, and each has above forty Ends, in all ten Thousand; and a Failure in any one of these would cause a great Irregularity in the Body, and in many Death and Destruction.

Now not to dilate further upon this Proof, I appeal to you, whether these strange and admirable Contrivances; these natural Tendencies to one Point; and with all, these Means so proportionable, do not cry out, *Ipsæ fecit nos, & non ipsi nos?* We are neither the Work of blind Chance, nor the Product of fatal Necessity, but of an infinite Power and Wisdom. We cannot cast an Eye upon a rough Landskip, but the very sight of it leads us to a Painter: And if a Tree or Animal in Effigies conducts us naturally to a Hand that drew them, and to Wisdom that contriv'd them; can these living Originals be father'd on Hazard or Necessity?

Theo. These things you mention are worthy of Observation; they entertain sometimes my serious Thoughts, and cast me into Raptures of Admiration; but yet they do not exceed the Force and Energy of Nature.

Enseb. What do you mean by Nature? Is it an intelligent Being? Or void of all Sensation and Reason? If intelligent, you misuse Words to confound Notions, you represent God travestied into Nature? If it be deprived of all Knowledge, then you run to Matter and Motion: Now these two are incapable of Wisdom, they can neither think nor understand, they are without Reason, and even without Sense. Notwithstanding the World is invested with plain Characters of Wisdom, they are stamp'd and engrav'd on each part of the Universe: The Learned and Ignorant, the Vulgar and the Philosophers are Unanimous in this Point: What then remains, but that we draw this necessary Inference, that some wise Intelligent Eternal Being did raise out of nothing this lovely Fabrick, that he plac'd every Creature in its proper Station, prefix'd its End, provided it with Instruments to compleat the Work Providence has assign'd it.

Theo. You know our Understandings are very short-sighted, they discover nothing plainly but our Ignorance, where-ever we look we find our selves encompass'd with

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Difficulties, the most trifling, the most common Objects perplex our Reason, we cannot fix a right Notion of Production, if we could, perchance the Mystery would vanish without any Recourse to a first Cause. Your little Tricks of *Pass* surprize the Ignorant, who often ascribe to Magick those Operations that have no other Cause than slight of Hand. In fine, as Mr. *Hobbs* takes Notice, the Multitude *deifies what it cannot comprehend, Ignorance begets Admiration, Admiration Respect, Respect Fear, and Fear Religion.*

Euseb. I am glad to see you so low in your own Eyes this Morning, and that your peremptory and dogmatical Humour is spent; surely you have lately made a more intimate Acquaintance with human Nature; and a fuller Discovery of the Imperfections of our Intellect has read you a Lesson of Humility. Indeed our Understandings are poor and unfurnish'd, they come into the World unhap'd, and must be polished by Study, before they can give a tolerable Account of the most obvious Trifles; and yet when this is done, we cannot rely on their Intelligence, for they have but few Principles to steer by; the Gross of our Knowledge is made of Illations, which are beaten out with great Labour and Attention; and when we contemplate self-evident Truth at a Distance, the Mind is puzzled at the view of some emerging Circumstances: Which makes us forget or mistake the Connexion of the Consequence with the Premises; and then our Labour is rewarded with Error.

I willingly therefore grant, that I cannot dive into abstruse Secrets of Nature. I neither know the Mystery of Generation, nor that of Corruption. I believe I am a Compound of two very different Ingredients, Spirit and Matter: But how such disproportion'd things keep so strict a Correspondence, I am as ignorant as the Child unborn. Perchance a Philosopher may harangue, and talk more plausibly upon the Matter, than an Oyster-woman: But after all; if we bring his elaborated Discourse to the Test, we shall find nothing but Cant, Terms, and Scholastical Jargon. But what then? Cannot I judge that *Paul's Church* never made it self, before I have conn'd over *Vitruvius*? Or must I know all the Rules of *Limning* to be sure the Signs in *London* are the Work of a Painter? Tho' I cannot conceive which way

the *Thames* was turn'd, when the Bridge was built, or when the Arches was form'd of Marble, or Free-Stone ; yet I am pretty well convinc'd by the Uniformity and Contrivance of the Fabrick, that Wisdom and Art had Hand in the Building. And I would laugh at those who should maintain, that either *Fate*, *Chance*, or *Nature* plac'd the Stones in that regular Form : A thousand Things in the Universe seem to me mere Riddles. Yet I behold a stately Machine made up of ten Millions of Pieces : I see Beauty, Symmetry, and Design ; this suffices to persuade a rational Creature nothing but Wisdom contriv'd it ; and nothing but Power put the *Idea* in Execution. So that I infer from what I know, that an infinite Wisdom fram'd and governs the World : Not from what I do not know.

Theo. You must not argue from Works of Art to those of Nature. We see Bridges, Churches, and Pictures made by the Hands of Artificers, and therefore we rationally conclude, that even those that are of an older standing owe their Origin to Art. But who saw the first Stone laid in the Foundation of the World ?

Enseb. You turn your Battery the wrong Way ; and level at your own Hypothesis as directly as I could with : Because we see Pictures under the Hand of the Painter, and Edifices under those of Masons and Carpenters ; we have Reason to infer, that all such Things are Effects of an intelligent *Agent* ; but if such trifles require an understanding Artificer, I would know why the Fabrick of the World, compacted of so many Parts, so curiously wrought, so artificially knit together, should not lead us to the same Conclusion ? Have I Right to ascribe the raising of a wretched Cabbin to Wisdom, and not the whole Frame of the Universe ? Must I confess the pretty Proportion of a Leash of Wheels in a Watch as owing to the Skill of a Workman ? And that the stupendous Frame of my Body is the pure Object of blind Chance ? Or fatal Necessity ? Certainly such palpable Absurdities would persuade one, that Sense and Reason were not made for Mankind ; and that we force Nature when we pretend to it.

DIALOGUE XIX.

The Fourth Proof. The Invention of Arts and Sciences show the World is not Eternal. And consequently that it was made by a powerful Agent.

Enseb. WE see new Arts start up with new Ages. The World is now better provided, not only with Fences against Necessity, but even with Supports of Grandeur, than it was two thousand Years ago. The Discovery of the Card is but of late standing, tho' of great Importance. The Inventions of Powder, and of the Press are not much more ancient. *Rerum Natura sacra non simul tradit.* Arts follow the Law of Nature, they are brought forth by Degrees, and are polish'd by Time and Experience.

Other Arts, as they are more necessary to Mankind, so they are more Ancient: Yet we can track them up to their Origin. We know the Inventors of Husbandry and Tillage; who Traffick on Foot, and first brav'd the Ocean in Ships. Now if the World was Eternal, the Industry and Study of Man were Eternal also. How then is it credible; that Men of the same Temper with us, sagacious, witty, and ambitious, should saunter away a whole Eternity, without making those Discoveries we owe wholly to the last six thousand Years? Was the World always a Child? Always in its Non-Age? Has it only arriv'd at the Years of Discretion since some few Ages?

Again, the Desire to perpetuate their Memories runs in the Blood of all Men. We hate to bury our Names in the Grave with our Bodies, to sleep in Dust and Ashes, as unknown to Posterity, as we are to our Predecessors: Nay, some have been so besotted with the Charms of Life at second Hand, that because they wanted Vertues, they presented Posterity with their Vices; and those rather to be blam'd than forgotten. I suppose our Fore-fathers conveyed down to us their Inclinations, together with their Nature; and that none of their Passions chang'd in the Voyage, or were improv'd by Transplantation; their Propensions lean'd the same way, they were as high-met-

ed, as greedy of vain Applause as we: It cannot there-
 fore be question'd, but that Men so fond of Glory en-
 deavour'd to glut their Appetite, some at the Peril of
 their Lives, and others of their Quiet. It cannot be
 thought they either wanted Matter or Occasion: Ambiti-
 on never sleeps, it stands upon the Catch, and either finds
 Subject for Action, or makes one. The Power of a
 Neighbour, or the Weakness, are both strong Temptati-
 ons to an ambitious Prince; *That* promises Glory, *This*
 conquest; and either draws on a War. Pray tell me,
 wherefore, who were those ancient Heroes? Where did
 they Reign? What Province did they waste or subdue?
 Who rais'd the first Empire? Who built the second on the
 ruins of the first? Was not a whole Eternity able to pro-
 duce one *Homer*? One *Curtius*? One *Livy*? Did it never
 come into any King's Head to bribe a Pen, or to buy a
 Panegyrick? Were all the Wits of the World so stub-
 born, as neither to be mov'd by Interest nor Applause,
 to write a News-Letter or Gazette? Indeed I do not
 wonder we have no exact Diary of past Transactions;
 or to digest an eternal Story into Days, is a laborious
 task, and requires a Purse to buy Materials, as well as
 a vast Stock of Patience to employ them. But still, me-
 thinks, we might reasonably expect some Fragments, or
 at least the Name of one Prince. But, alas! All those
 Worthies lie interr'd under the Ruins of Time, their brave
 Exploits sleep with their Persons, and their very Empires
 are drown'd in Silence and Oblivion. By the help of pro-
 phane Records, we cannot trace time above the *Theban*
 War, as *Lucretius* confesses; and therefore *Macrobius* con-
 cludes the World could not be Eternal. *Quis dubitet quin
 mundus recens & novus sit, cum Historia Græca bis mille
 annorum historiam vix contineat?* Who Doubts but the
 World is of a short standing, seeing the Græcian Story gives
 an Account only of two thousand Years? Perchance you
 will say, Writing is but of late Invention; and that all
 the memorable Actions of Antiquity perish'd for want
 of this happy Means of conveying them to Posterity:
 Where are at least the Painters and Carvers? A Pi-
 cture, Statue, or Medal would have given some Satisfac-
 tion; or had they rais'd one *Pyramid*, we might at least
 have an Assurance all Mankind was not drunk with O-
 pium; and stupified with an eternal Lethargy: But af-

ter all, 'tis strange that so busy, so sharp a Creature as Man, during an infinite Succession of Ages, should not stumble upon the Way of Writing, a thing so necessary to the Support of Society; and withal so obvious: That Man was certainly fortunate indeed, who hit upon an Art in some Years, that had escaped the Search of all Mankind for the Space of a whole Eternity.

Theo. The Answer to your Proof is very easy, *Tempus edax rerum*, sung the Poet: Time like *Saturn* devours its Children: It consumes its own Productions, and preys upon its Off-spring. Now if Time be such a Cormorant; Eternity must be a Greater. Time, like Distance, diminishes Things; but Eternity swallows them up, and removes them beyond the Sphere of Memory. How many brave Actions within these thousand Years have slipped by the Pens of the most inquisitive Historians? They are wore out of Memory, together with the *Heroes* that achiev'd them, and lie entomb'd in Oblivion and Forgetfulness: Nay, Cities not only decay, but vanish. What remains of that famous *Babylon*, but the Name? We know not what it was; and are ignorant even where it stood. And *Florus* confesses, that in his time, not only *Samnium* was lost, but also its very Ruins. If some few Ages eat out the Memory of noble Exploits, and convey out of Sight Cities, together with the Earth they stood on; why do you call for an exact Register of Arts? An Eternal Genealogy of Princes? Or an Account of their Actions? They are lost in an infinite Succession of Ages. They are drown'd in the Ocean of Eternity.

Euseb. By what Misfortune?

Theo. By Deluges and Conflagrations.

Euseb. Pray, Sir, let me ask you to what Office of Intelligence you address your self for those Deluges, Conflagrations, and Wars? Upon what Memorials do you ground the Story of your *Pre-adamitical* Transactions? To say there were such Things, is not to prove it. And what you assert without good Caution, may be deny'd with Reason.

Theo. Under Favour, methinks my Answer is very much to the Purpose. It attacks not your Proof in the Rear, but in the Front; and strikes at the very Heart of it. You show the World was not Eternal; because it is invested with all the Characters of Novelty. Industry

Industry (you say) either improves old Arts, or invents new ones. Some are younger than we: Others than our Fathers: And the most Ancient have their Origin. Their Inventors are Recorded in Story, and come within the Memory of Books. Whence you conclude, the World was not Eternal; because those Arts must of Necessity have been of a more stale Invention. For how can a Man imagine that those things should lie out of Sight for a whole Eternity, which have been discover'd in a few Ages? To which I answer; that all this may be very well reconcil'd with the World's Eternity; for they might have been found out an Infinity of Times; and as often lost by accidental Deluges and Conflagrations. Now, if by such unforeseen and irremediable Chances, Arts and Sciences might fall into Oblivion, your Argument falls to the Ground, it cannot subsist; and it is of no Force to prove the *Non-Eternity* of the World.

Enseb. My Argument is as well timbred as ever, and your weak Reason makes me more in Love with it: For supposing such Accidents might happen, *i. e.* were possible; by what new-coin'd Logick can you infer they did? Many things may be, that never will be, and he that governs himself by Possibilities, may fear all things, and hope for any thing. Nay, your Possibilities, (as I shew'd before) like a two-edged Sword cut both ways, they stand for each Side of the Contradiction, and whilst they take both Parts, advantage neither. For as you say 'twas possible for such Accidents to happen, and therefore conclude they did: So I affirm 'twas possible not to happen, therefore infer they did not. My Argument is certainly stronger than yours, for we find by Experience, that fewer things happen that are possible, than do not.

But to close with your Argument, I ask, whether those Deluges were Particular or Universal? A particular Inundation will not do your Business. For supposing the Sea should break its Inclosure, and play such Pranks in our Island, as it did in *Attica*; would the surviving part of the World replunge into Barbarity and Ignorance? Would the Arts of Writing and Printing disappear in *France*, *Spain*, and *Italy*, because *England* lay under Water? No, no, Sir! The World would jog on. Arts would flourish just as they do. Perchance the greater Sciences of

of making *Pudding* and *Brawn*, which (as Mr. John Ray takes Notice in his *Observations*, are Dishes proper to England) might suffer by the Misfortune, yet Industry might retrieve them, for without doubt the Receipts were slip'd into *Flanders* with our Armies; and as the *Dutch* taught us to besiege Towns, so certainly we instructed them in the deep Mysteries of *Pudding* and *Brawn*.

It follows therefore that those Deluges were Universal (but not Supernatural I hope) for then you grant the very thing we contend for, viz. a God. Nor could they be Natural; because, according to the present Situation of Things, an Universal Deluge caus'd by the Force of Nature is utterly impossible; and I could easily demonstrate it, did the Stress of our present Debate depend upon *Hydrostaticks*: But if I grant such a Deluge naturally Possible; yet as to the Probability you are never the nigher; for how can any Man in his Senses persuade himself, that a thing is probable, or likely to happen, that has never fall'n out in an infinite Duration? He that can believe that to be probable, that has never come to pass in an eternal Revolution of Ages, must not be an Enemy to Credulity.

Theo. I never said yet, that an Universal Inundation was Probable; you have foisted in that Word for your own Advantage.

Enseb. Have you not told me, those Deluges have come so very near the Matter, that few escap'd? That they have brought Mankind a thousand times within an Ace of its Ruin? The Waters then did cover all the Surface of the Earth; except a small Spot of Ground able to give footing to half a Hundred. Why could they not swell six Foot higher? Who commanded this furious Element to halt in that critical Point? If it could rise so high, by the help of natural Causes; why not some Foot higher? And if it could; why did it not in an Eternity? Methinks there should be Spring-Deluges, as well as Spring-Tides: And in such a Tract of Time it might once at least mount to the highest Pitch. In fine, Sir, I desire you, and the whole Sect of Atheistical Philosophers, to produce one Reason that carries the least Shadow of Probability to prove the Waters naturally could swell to the Tops of the highest Mountains, and not cover them, if they could, within the Compass of an Eternity,

Eternity, they have done it : For it seems incredible, that Nature should not do in an infinite Space whatever lay within the Reach of its Power.

But again, it seems strange, that all the ingenuous Part of Mankind should be involv'd in this common Shipwreck ; and a small Parcel of illiterate, ignorant, unprofitable Blockheads survive the Fall of Nature : For if Hundred only escap'd, 'tis very likely some Mechanicks, some Carpenters, some Plowmen, one at least that could write and read ; and probably one Taylor might be in his fortunate Company. If so, they might propagate their Arts with their Blood, and re-people the World in short Time with Trades, as well as with Inhabitants. Now Things have happen'd quite contrary ; the World, no stock'd with People, was many Years destitute of Arts. They knew neither the Way of Ploughing nor sowing : They could neither plant Vines, or press Wine, nor turn Milk into Curds, nor those into Cheese. Men liv'd on the mere Bounty of Nature ; Water satisfy'd their Thirst, and Fruit their Hunger : And for want of a *Post-Office*, every one did his own Message. Nay, they had not the Wit to cover their Nakedness ; so that God himself, according to Tradition, cut out the first cloaths, and from this Moment we may date the Company of *Merchant-Tailors*.

I come to your Conflagrations which can only concern books : For they cannot consume Arts, unless first they lay upon Men : And methinks the Fire must have nickt the Time, *that is*, set upon all the Houses in the World together, when all Mankind was bury'd in a profound sleep, to do the Feat compleat. Now (I fancy) tho' flames should stand upon the Watch for an Eternity, they would never meet with so fair an occasion to dispatch their Species : But at last they have ravag'd Libraries, (you say) and glutted their Rage with *Memorials* and *Records* ; they not only turn'd Authors themselves into ashes ; but all the *Historical Dictionaries*, together with the *Journals des Scavens* : So that their very Names are consum'd with the Paper that preserv'd 'em ; and mingled with the Dust we tread on. Your System is ridiculous to be examin'd, too foolish to be confuted ; Reason has an Antipathy against such Absurdities ; they are unable even to work on a Madman. There is

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no question but Fire may master Libraries, as well as private Houses, and treat them with as little Regard as *White-Hall*; but this will not do your Jobb, to save *Phænomena's*, we must suppose either that all the Books in the World were wheedled into one Magazine before the Mine sprung, or that Fire-Balls were cast into all the Libraries at a Signal; these two Ways might do a great deal of Execution, and dispatch some *Tun* of Divinity and History in a short Time; and I conceive they are possible, but to suspect 'em probable, is to impose on our Reason; the very Thought of such a Thing is a Scandal to human Nature; but to believe it, Frenzy and Madness.

D I A L O G U E XX.

The fifth Proof. 'Tis shewn quasi a priore, the World was not Eternal a se.

Enseb. I Confess it's more easy to deny, than to prove; the Assailant always attacks at a Disadvantage that is not above the Performance of Ignorance or Folly: But this requires both Wit and Study. However I waive your Advantage, and will draw a Reason from two from the very Nature and Constitution of the World which I think comes near Conviction, and makes it highly credible, it could not possibly be *ab eterno a se.*

If it were Eternal; it is a necessary and independent Being; if necessary and independent, it must be Eternal *a parte post.* For as it depends of Nothing but it self for its Being, it can depend of Nothing distant from it self for its Conservation; and as its own Nature was sufficient to give it *Existence*, so it is sufficient to continue it; therefore if its *Existence* was necessary, its Continuation is necessary, and if this be necessary, it must be Eternal; hence it follows, that if the *Whole* was Eternal its *Parts* must be Eternal; for the *World* is not distinct from all its *Parts*: Therefore if the *World* was Eternal all its *Parts* were Eternal, also *a parte ante*, and will be so *a parte post*: But no Part of the *World* is Eternal therefore the *Whole* is not Eternal. Let us single out

one Species: 'Tis evident that Men are born, and die; therefore 'tis evident that Men were not *a parte ante* Eternal.

Theo. I wonder you will impose upon the Company: This is not to reason, but to trifle; and the Proof is more Raillery than Reason. I know I was nothing sixty Years ago, and that within some time I shall return to my everlasting Home. I am not of my self, but the Work of Nature, and must march off when She commands me, nor was there ever any *Eternal* Individual.

Enseb. A little clearer if you please: When you say Man was *Eternal*, what do you mean?

Theo. I mean the Species.

Enseb. I understand. Are you then turn'd Platonick, and separate the Species from the Individuals?

Theo. No.

Enseb. Why then; methinks it follows, if no Individual was *a se*, the Species was not *a se*, because the Species is indistinct from all the Individuals.

Theo. You call in again at *Infinitem*, and forget it is no *All*. *All* is a Chymera, a kind of philosophical word, not apply'd to a determinate Number.

Enseb. Indeed *Infinitem* has an excellent Situation, like Cities in Boggs, there is no coming at it; but at present it lies out of my Way, and I shall draw off without meddling with it. But I must tell you, I take a little trouble for a Solution. At least human Species is *Eternal a se*.

Theo. I have granted it.

Enseb. Why then it can never be extinct: For what depends of it self must be *Eternal*, and whatever is *Eternal a se parte ante*, must be so *a parte post*; unless perchance the Fancy should take a Thing to destroy its self, which is unlikely, and impossible to our Hypothesis. For whatsoever exists *a se*, exists necessarily; but what exists necessarily *a se*, must always exist, otherwise it will be necessary, and not necessary, which implies a flat contradiction.

Theo. Well; supposing this true; what do you intend?

Enseb. That our Species is a Stranger to Eternity, as well as its Individuals, and no more *a se* than you or I:

For all those Men who are now in Being, must once knock off, and submit to the common Fate of Mortality.

Theo. They must, this is a terrible Truth, but pass Debate; methinks I would purchase one Dose of *Esculapian's* Immortal *Poffet-Drink*, at any rate.

Enseb. If they dy'd without Issue, our Species would be at an end.

Theo. Most true; if they made a Vow of Continence, and kept it, our Race would be short-liv'd: But I have no great Apprehension, that all Mankind will engage in an *Association* to stand by Chastity with their Lives and Fortunes, or to die Batchelors.

Enseb. It's not very likely indeed: So long as there is an Atheist in the World, the Work of Propagation will go on: At least such a Resolution is not impossible, for you and I can make it, and there is the same Reason for every Man in the World: 'Tis therefore possible for the whole Species to perish.

Theo. What then?

Enseb. Why then it follows by an evident Illation, that our Species is not *a se*: For whatever is *a se*, must of Necessity be Eternal *a parte post*, as it is Eternal *a parte ante*. The same Argument takes in any Species now Existent; whence I conclude, that if no Species be Eternal, no Part of the World is Eternal, nor by consequence the Whole.

Theo. Not so fast if you please: You prove too much, and by consequence Nothing.

Enseb. How so?

Theo. Could not God (if there be such a Thing) have created the World *ab aeterno*.

Enseb. My Reason tells me he could not: But not to engage in a Matter foreign to our Dispute, I grant he could.

Theo. Let us then suppose he did create it *ab aeterno* in this Case our Species would be Eternal *a parte ante*.

Enseb. It would.

Theo. Therefore by your Way of demonstrating, would be Eternal *a parte post*; because according to your new Logick, whatever is Eternal one Way, must be Eternal the other: But I conceive the whole Species might be stifled by your general Association, even in this

thesis, as well as in the other, therefore it evidently follows, that the *Species* of Mankind would be *Eternal*, and not *Eternal*.

Euseb. Sir, you mistake the Force of my Argument, I do not say, whatever is *Eternal a parte ante*, must be so *a parte post*: But whatever is *Eternal a parte ante a se*, must be *Eternal a parte post*. I gave you the Reason just now, *viz.* because whatever exists *a se* is *independent*, and *intrinsically Necessary*, and therefore it's incapable of Destruction; but whatever is created, depends on its Cause, to whose Power alone it owes its Being; and by consequence is nothing *intrinsically Necessary*: 'tis therefore no more strange that Things that are by courtesy, and exist by Benevolence perish, than that Men walk off, and crumble into Dust and Ashes.

Theo. But if we suppose with *Aristotle*, that God is a *Necessary Agent*, two Things naturally follow: *First*, That our *Species* was *ab aeterno*; and, *Secondly*, That it is *Necessary*. Therefore it was *Necessary ab aeterno*: or in this Case it could not be *ab aeterno*; yet this being granted, the Difficulty returns upon you, for if you say, our *Species* (in this Supposition) must be *Eternal a parte post*, what can hinder me from making the same reply? If you say, it may perish, therefore 'tis true that our *Species* may end, tho' it be *Eternal a se, independent and necessary*.

Euseb. You have cast the Cause upon a palpable Untruth, and beg the Protection of an Absurdity: Howsoever to combat your Opinion more successfully, we'll examine its most plausible Pretences, and see if we can discover the Weakness of them. I say then, this Retreat will not secure you: For till your *Species* remain *intrinsically contingent*, and has no other *Necessity* but that of its Cause; according to its own Nature it may exist or not exist: It has no Perfection inherent, that challenges before *Non-Existence*: So that if it be granted, that it should exist necessarily *ab aeterno*, this *Necessity* is merely *extrinsic*; it's nothing but an Imperfection of the Cause, no Perfection of the Effect: Now in this Supposition our *Species* might perish, because it has no *intrinsic* Vertue that opposes its Destruction, but if it exists *a se*, then Existence is identified with its Nature, and it can no more cease to be, than it could not be:

So that no *Hypothesis* can elude an Argument; wherefore I conclude it's evident our *Species* may be extinguish'd, therefore it's evident it cannot be Eternal a *se*. But pray remember what I told you just now, your Argument owes its Force to a palpable Absurdity, and you know such Weapons do small Execution: You suppose God a *necessary Agent*, now the very Supposition destroys him; for Liberty is a Perfection: Seeing therefore God is infinite in Perfection, you cannot suppose him void of Freedom, without supposing him not infinitely Perfect, and by consequence not God: So that your Discourse runs thus; *If God were God, and not God; if he Created necessarily a Species ab æterno, and did not Create it; this Species would not be subject to Destruction, and would be subject to Destruction: This is cornutum argumentum, but because it goars with both Horns, it wounds with neither.*

Again: If God lay under a Necessity of creating *ab æterno*, why of this World rather than of another? If nothing else lies within the reach of his Power, a *finite* Perfection has drain'd his creative Faculty: His *Omnipotence* is at a Stop; and by consequence his *Infinity* and *Being* at an End: If he can create something else, what determin'd him to leave all other Creatures in the State of Nothing, and to invest this World with Dignity of Existence? If the Determination came from the Nature of the World, then it requir'd Existence *ab æterno*, and so must have been *ab æterno*, without any Obligation to God for its Being: If from God, then he is free, and the Existence of the World is the Effect of his Liberality, not of Necessity; whence it follows, that every Moment it lies at his Mercy, he may thrust every Individual into Nothing, with the same Freedom and Easiness he drew them out of it.

Some Philosophers (I know) make God a *necessary Agent*, not to suppose him *Idle*; they fancy Laziness becomes his Majesty less than Necessity, and because they cannot assign him any other Employment but Creation they infer he created this World *ab æterno*.

These People come within an Ace of the Extravagance of the Poets, who to cut out some Work for their God *Mercury*, made him a Post-Boy: But let us take at present these Dreams for Truths, these Fictions for Content: I follow

follows at least he may destroy this World, upon Condition he'll take the Pains to build another; nay, he may raise with one Hand, and pull down with the other, for all Eternity; for in this Case it is evident he cannot want Employment, and his Business will equal his Activity: So that to conclude in Spite of the Protection of Absurdity it self, you must confess that every *Species* that exists is subject to Destruction, and therefore not *se*.

Theo. Tho' no *Species* be eternal, Matter may be Eternal.

Enseb. What if it be?

Theo. If it be, these different *Species* which grace the World, might spring out of the first Fruitfulness of the Earth, which certainly was more prolifick some Ages ago than at present.

Enseb. Ho, Sir! We are out of our way, and just fallen on the Confines of *Democratism*. The last Moment the World was *Ens a se*, and now by the Vertue of some Adventure, it's transform'd into an *Ens per Accidens*. Seeing you are in a Fit of Fiction, make use of Fancy before it cool, and say Men are hatcht in Ovens like Chickens in *Egypt*, or that Beasts spring from Muck, and Men from Parsly-Beds: I am almost asham'd to confute Absurdities, so gross at first Sight, so palpable, that no Discourse can make them more apparent: What would the World say if you advance this Opinion in Print? They ought to look upon you as Mad or Foolish, if they would do you Right; But I admit the wond'rous fecundity of the Earth, and ask you how it comes to pass the *Species* of Animals are not Eternal! For either the Earth possess'd this prolifick Quality *ab aeterno*, or it did not; if it did not, by what happy Chance did it come by it? If from it self, it must be Eternal; if from another, you admit a distinct Agent, and so our Controversy is at an End: If it did possess this prolifick Vertue *ab aeterno*, then it produc'd all things *ab aeterno* (for I suppose Matter is a necessary Agent:) But if this Vertue be Eternal, methinks it should still remain, and then we might have the Satisfaction sometimes to breed Horses out of Quagmires, or reap good Crops of Men. If this producing Quality falls with Age, why is it not quite Extinct? Why does the Earth bring forth any

thing? An inexhaustible Vertue will run upon the Lees in the Space of an Eternity, and end in Sterility. Thus you see your self at a Loss, tho' Matter be Eternal; the more you evade a first Agent distinct from the World, the more you encounter him, and you have nothing left but the Liberty of being a Deist, or a Fool.

But to give full Satisfaction, I offer you a Reason or two, which seem to conclude, the very Matter cannot be Eternal *a se*. First, 'tis evident, of all Beings Matter comes the nearest to Nothing, it has scarce any other Perfection, than that of bare *Existence*, 'tis *pura Potentia*, a mere Capacity: Now upon what Right does this abstract Thing challenge the glorious Attribute of *Aseity* and *Eternity*? Before we put it in Possession of such transcendent Titles, both Reason and Justice command us to examine its Pretensions: On Account of Perfection, it can put in no Claim, for the most vile Insects that creep in Mire, and spring from Corruption, lock up a greater Treasure of Perfections in an Eye alone, than are diffus'd thro' the whole Mass of Matter: If therefore, neither these, nor even Man himself dares aspire to *Independence* and *Eternity*, why should Matter? To adjudge it these incommunicable Predicates on Account of Imperfection, is very extraordinary: Indeed such a Sentence may argue Compassion or good Nature in a Judge, but not one Grain of Justice: Is Beggary a Title to Greatness? Or Peasantry to Nobility? Because I am born a Scavenger, must I challenge a Place at the Council Table? Or sue for a Dukedom, because my Family wants a Coat of Arms? Is it not as ridiculous to dignify Matter with *Aseity*, because it borders upon Nothing, as to make it *Independent*, because it cannot exist without some Form?

Theo. Its right to Independence is neither founded on Imperfection, nor Perfection, but on its Nature.

Euseb. What do you mean? Is not *Aseity* a Perfection?

Theo. Yes.

Euseb. Therefore the Exigence of *Aseity* founded in Matter must be a Perfection; for certainly to claim a Perfection as a Debt, not a Gift, is one; but how do you know this Exigence is founded on the Nature of Matter? A Gentleman's Word will not pass current among

amongst Philosophers, as it is does amongst Taylors and Vintners: They require Caution, those *ipse dixit* Days expir'd with old *Pythagoras*, and according to the present Constitution of Mankind, will not revive in our Time: Tell me then, by what mysterious Light have you discovered, that Aseity is entail'd on Matter? That it's a Branch of Birth-Right? I conceive an Assertion may be prov'd two ways, either by Authority or Reason; could you *subpœna* a Brace of Eternal Witnesses, they might go far to the clearing the Point in Controversy, but there are few of that Stamp in the Nation; they are as rare as a reasonable Atheist: Seeing therefore Witnesses cannot relieve you, you must retreat to Reason: Regale us, I beseech you, with a Demonstration.

Theo. We find by Experience, that Matter is not liable to Corruption; tho' Compounds rise and fall, it stands immoveable; it neither loses any thing by Time, nor gains: There was no more a thousand Years ago than to Day, nor will there be less in future Ages, than at present, it therefore will be *Eternal*, and if it will be *Eternal*, it has been *ab æterno*.

Enseb. You prove well, that as Matter cannot be corrupted, so it cannot be generated, and by consequence will be *Eternal*; so far you are in the Right: But then it does not follow it was *a se ab æterno*, because it might have been Created; for the Impossibility of Creation cannot be inferr'd from any true Principle: Nay, I have prov'd already that Matter could not be *a se*, so that your Argument falls to the Ground, and without any Prejudice to the force of my Proof.

Secondly, If Matter be *ens a se*, an *eternal*, *necessary*, and *independent* Being, it is *actus purus*, i. e. it had no Capacity to receive any more Perfections, than those it possess'd *ab æterno*; for there is no Reason why it should possess one more than another: Therefore *ab æterno*, it either possess'd no Perfection, which destroys the Hypothesis, or *all*: If it had *all*, it cannot receive any more; therefore if it be *Eternal a se*, *necessary* and *independent*, it is *actus purus*, incapable of any further Perfection.

Again, if it be *necessary* and *independent*, it cannot lose any Perfection it had *ab æterno*; because, if it could, that might be, and might not be, and by consequence would not be intrinsically Necessary; besides, as it depends

pende of its self alone for its Being, so nothing distinct can possibly destroy it.

Hence it follows, that whatever is *Eternal a se, necessary* and *independent*, must be unalterable; for all Change is a Motion, either from a greater Perfection to a less, or from a Less to a Greater, or at least to an Equal: Seeing therefore an *eternal, necessary, and independent* Being is *actus purus*, uncapable either of acquiring or losing any Perfection, it must be *unalterable*.

Hence it follows, that Matter cannot be *eternal, necessary, and independent*: First, because it is an incomplete Being, and has a natural Tendency to Forms; 'tis (as I may say) out of its Element, in a State of Violence and *Longing*, until it compasses a perfect Body, and cannot naturally Exist without the actual Exercise of that Office: To be therefore a Part is one of Matter's Perfections, because nothing can naturally desire, what is not a natural Perfection: Now I have prov'd already that no perfect *Species* could be *Eternal*, therefore Matter did acquire some new Perfection when those *Species* began, which it had not before; hence it follows, that Matter is neither *actus purus*, nor *unalterable*, because in time it acquir'd a Perfection which it had not *ab æterno*, and by consequence is not *a se, necessary and independent*; therefore it was Created by an All-powerful Agent, which we call God.

Theo. We are bemir'd in *Aristotle's Materia prima*, and slipt into the System of substantial Forms: You would scare me with old Peripateticism, and put off obsolete Dreams for Demonstration: That counterfeit Coin is call'd in, and only goes current at *Salamanca* in *Spain*, where Antiquity has the same Charms as Novelty has with us: They stick to old Opinions, as they do to old Fashions, and will no more part with *Aristotle*, than the *Chinese* with their Beards: But we have degraded the *Stagirite*. To swear in *verba magistri*, is an Incroachment upon our Liberty; in fine, Sir, *Materia prima* is an empty Name, and substantial Forms in a groundless Invention; and your Demonstration is void of all Force, because it relies on Fiction and Vision,

Euseb. I neither declare for *Aristotle* nor *Gassendus*, nor have a greater Inclination for *Des Cartes*, than the *Chymists*; My Proof runs thro' any Hypothesis, and is calcu-

calculated up for all Systems. Tell me your Opinion, that I may model my Argument, and point it against your Evasion.

Theo. What we call *Matter*, is nothing but a Complex of various simple Bodies *ab eterno*; they be an innate Quality scower about, and by a mutual Concourse frame those Compounds that stock the Universe: The Variety only consists in the Diversity of Combinations: When such a Number of *hot*, *dry*, and *moist Atoms* cling together, up starts a *Horse*; the same may be said of Mixts: They differ merely accidentally, and have no other Form (if I may say so) than the *Taleity* of the Mixture; hence it comes, that Matter is not subject to Changes, and is only capable of a new extrinsick Perfection: Besides, those Atoms being perfect in themselves, have no Bent or Inclination to compound: They are as content in a State of Separation, as of Composition; and as willingly form a *Worm* as a *Monarch*: Tho' therefore *Species* were not *ab eterno a se*, Matter enjoin'd all its natural Perfections *ab eterno*, and is withal unchangeable, unless you call a new Situation, Alteration, &c. So that you must forge a new Demonstration, if you intend to argue Matter out of *Aseity*.

Enseb. I suppose you do not expect a Confutation of your System, it lies at present quite out of my Way, and can be no Part of my Task: I discharge my Duty, if I show, that the *Atomistical Hypothesis* does not weaken the Force of my Reason: Notwithstanding I must tell you, a wise Man will not easily believe, that dull and dead Atoms are able to frame a living Creature: For certainly Life is something more than the bare Motion of *hot*, *moist*, and *dry Atoms*, and an Atheist must have as mean an Opinion of himself as of God, before he can assert, that the only Distinction between him and an Insect, lies in the Difference of the Mixture: Methinks, such an Opinion might dispose him to Modesty: Nay, of all Men, he should be the least presuming, who acknowledges such a base Extraction, and puts no other Difference between him and a Brute, than between *fine Holland* and *Scotch Cloth*: Yet upon Experiment, these are the great Pretenders of Mankind, who while they confess themselves so near ally'd to Beasts, adore their Excellencies, and fall down before *Calves*, as the *Jews* did in

in the Wilderness: Indeed he that wants Leisure or Capacity to Examine his Nature, or persuades himself his better Part is Immortal, may grow vain upon a kind Presumption, or the real Conviction of such a towering Perfection: But for a Man to be proud, who pretends to demonstrate his own Baseness, is little less than Frenzy: Now pray attend, Atoms (you say) have an intimate Principle of Motion; Nature, as we find by Experience, always works some End, therefore that Motion of the Atoms has some End; we cannot discover the Ends better than by the Effects, the Effects are Compounds; therefore the End of that Motion inherent in the Matter is Compound; hence it follows, that actually to constitute a compos'd Body, is a Perfection of the Matter, because it is a Possession of the End, to which Nature inclines it; but it did not possess this End *ab aeterno*, therefore *ab aeterno* it wanted some Perfection, of which it was capable; therefore 'tis alterable, and by consequence not Eternal *a se*; besides, if it had not all the Perfections *ab aeterno* it possesses them in Time, it had no Perfections *ab aeterno*; because there is no Reason why it should have one, and not all others of which it is capable: Wherefore I conclude it was not *ab aeterno a se*, neither will it avail you to reply, These Perfections are accidental; *First*, Because *Ens a se*, can have no accidental Perfection, for whatever it has is necessary and identify'd with its Nature; and *Secondly*, Because it is *Actus purus*, as I said before.

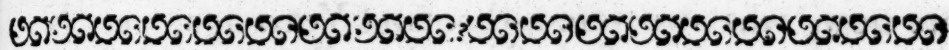
Theo. This is ridiculous to Excess! What if a Ball of Wax was *a se*, could I not mould it into a Cube, not melt it down? You return a Paradox for an Answer.

Enseb. You must not wonder if one Absurdity begets another, a ridiculous Consequence flows from a ridiculous Antecedent; and one Paradox is the best Proof of another. To expect Reason from Nonsense, is to gape after Impossibilities. If you suppose a Sphere of Wax Eternal *a se*, either that Figure was necessary, or it was not; if it was not, who cast it into that Form? Why was it a Sphere rather than a Cube? If it owes the Determination to some exterior Principle, then the Wax was not *a se*, because the Figure was not: If that Figure was necessary, the Nature of the Wax requir'd it; if the Nature of the Wax requir'd it, it can be destroyed no more than

than the Nature: But if you suppose that Sphere *a se*, the Nature of the Wax cannot possibly be destroyed, therefore neither can the Figure; indeed that Wax would be very stubborn, but Impossibilities are an inflexible Generation, and can no more be brought over to Reason, than Atheists. The World therefore is not Eternal *a se*, nor any Part of it; whence it remains, that a most powerful Author drew it out of Nothing, to whom we owe our Being and Conversation, and by consequence Homage.

Theo. Is this all you have to say to the Point?

Enseb. I could enlarge on the Matter; but for the present, I leave the Arguments to your Consideration. We lie under a *Dilemma*; if they hold good, they will stand upon Record against you; if not, against me: Which I suppose will be no unacceptable Revenge. You will have the Satisfaction of Laughing at the Vanity of the Attempt, and of applauding your Abilities into the Bargain.



DIALOGUE XXI.

The Sixth Proof. Tho' there were a GOD, he cannot convince those Atheists of his Being, who refuse Assent to the foregoing Proofs.

Enseb. I Have worsted you in the Judgment of Authority, and have dispatch'd Part of your Exceptions: We are come to the last Tribunal of Reason, and if I have the good Fortune to foil you here, our Suit is at End; and certainly I have all the Grounds in the World to hope a favourable Issue, for Reason never reverses the Sentence of universal Tradition, when back'd with a hundred Reasons.

In the first Place; you cannot admit the World to be Eternal *a se*, without striking upon a manifest Absurdity; now Absurdities cannot possibly flow from Truth; they are the Children of Falshood, and the Off-spring of Error.

Theo. If you can shew that the *Hypothesis* of the World's Eternity leads to any thing that clashes with Reason, or borders upon Error, without Doubt I lie at your Mercy:

Mercy: The *Consequence* takes after the *Antecedent*, and 'tis impossible for that to be ridiculous, without this be erroneous.

Enseb. You have granted, That if there be a God, he can manifest his Being to Men, by some sensible Effect of his Omnipotence.

Theo. I have, and a Man must take Pleasure in Folly, and dote on Contradictions, before he can deny a Truth so evident: For to confess an Omnipotent Being, and to refuse him the Power of manifesting himself by some exterior Sign to a Creature who is furnished with Senses, and endow'd with Reason, is a flat Contradiction.

Enseb. I am glad to hear so ingenious a Confession; pray therefore take Notice; if God intended to discover himself by an exterior Sign, he would choose some stately Work worthy of his Power, and suitable to his Grandeur.

Theo. He would.

Enseb. Let us then suppose, for some Moments, that you and I slept in our Beds of pure Possibility; that we are now, what we were a thousand Years ago, very Nothings: Let us suppose, besides, that all things else fall into the same State of Impotence; that an infinite Being exists alone, and resolves to communicate his Perfections to some Creatures, and to manifest himself to Man, the most perfect Piece of his Power. Immediately one *Fiat* calls a glorious Fabrick from an eternal *Nothing*, uniform in Variety, and various in Uniformity: A Creature dignified with Reason, set off with Senses, and enrich'd with a hundred noble Qualities, marches at the Head of this new-born Multitude: He admires at the stately Architecture of the Infant World, the Multiplicity of Parts, the stupendious Contrivance and Harmony of the whole: Can he, or his Posterity, by the Force of Reason, come to the Knowledge of the Deity that made it? According to your Principle they cannot. For tho' we suppose this new-fram'd World a thousand Times more perfect, than that we live in, they may conclude it was Eternal, as now you do, and they have a better Plea, because we suppose it more perfect. 'Tis true, the first Man knows he is not Eternal, but of what Standing the World is, or how he comes to be, is a Mystery: He may ascribe his good Luck to Chance, or his own Nature, as well as you: But

But if we come to his Descendants, they will be at a Puzzle for the Original of their Genealogy: They can arrive at the Knowledge of it, either by Tradition or Reason; and if by either, or both these Means, they can be ascertain'd they had a Beginning, why are not you assur'd we had one? For which way shall they meet with a more diffusive Tradition, or more pregnant Arguments than we have for the Beginning of this World? If the Structure of the new-suppos'd World be admirable to Amazement, that of the old is surprizing: If there appear in the Constitution of that, as many Characters of Wisdom and Power, as Parts; the very Blind may read as many in the Frame of this: That may open us a Perspective of Miracles, and this unfolds a Scene of Wonders: If therefore in spite of Tradition and Reason, in spite of the most visible Characters of Wisdom and Power; in fine, maugre as many Wonders as there are Objects without us, or Veins, Muscles, and Arteries within us, Atheists deny this World had any other Author than its own Necessity and Independency; why may not the Atheists of the new World elude the Force of Tradition and Reason by your wretched Evasion? They may certainly entrench themselves in the *Hypothesis* of Eternity, and out-face (by your Example) downright Demonstration.

Theo. Tho' indeed these new Gentlemen would be at a *Nonplus*, as well as we; and I believe that would vie Incredulity with this, yet God might manifest himself many Ways: *First*, By infusing into all Men as clear a Conviction of his Being, as we have of the first Principles of Reason. *Secondly*, By teaching them some Demonstration, that he created the World, which lies out of Sight. And *Thirdly*, By divine Revelation. These Methods are very feasible, and I fancy would do the Business.

Euseb. *First*, All those Ways are supernatural: Now 'tis very strange that Omnipotence should want Power to frame a Work capable to point out to a rational Creature its divine Contriver, without the Assistance of Miracles. But again, tho' God should infuse into all those Inhabitants of the new World, as clear a Knowledge of their Origin, as of the first Principles, Do you think all Debates would vanish at the Approach of that glaring Light?

Light? Have not Men denied the Truth of these great Principles in spite of Conviction, altho' they had no other Temptation to be foolish, but the Pleasure of contradicting? And why should you expect in your Case a more reasonable Procedure? Especially when the Omnipotent Motives of Lewdness and Epicurism, that debauch your Understanding, would corrupt and bribe theirs: For they may oppose against Demonstration these Arguments which support your Obstinacy, and buoy up your Infidelity. I cannot conceive how it is possible for an Infinite Mercy, and an Infinite Justice, to meet in the same Subject, how Justice can pardon, or Mercy punish; therefore, there is no such Thing.

To say something can be made of nothing, is to cross upon Reason, to build new Principles upon the Ruin of the old, and by Consequence to break down the Inclosure between Sophistry and Demonstration, Truth and Falshood; therefore *the World was not created*: Nay, 'twas possible to be *ab eterno*, therefore *it was*. What Evidence can be secure from the Attempts of these Arguments? They dare attack *Euclid*, and huff *Apollonius*: If resolute Denials pass content for Proofs, and Possibilities for Demonstrations, we pass all Things on Courtesy. A Man that dares look a Fool in the Face, may do strange Execution; he may deny us into Nothing, and by the sly Turn of a Possibility, demonstrate us out of Being.

Theo. Nay, a Man that is resolv'd to push Folly Home, may puzzle a six Form Philosopher, yet the Defeat of the one, will prove more glorious than the Victory of the other; but then I thought Evidence carried all before it, and captivated more Understandings than the Grand Seignior has enslav'd Christians.

Euseb. Evidence indeed is generally victorious, but oftentimes 'tis over-match'd: A Man seconded by Prejudice or Interest, stands immoveable: You must change his Circumstances before he will alter his Opinion: His Understanding never changes Sides, unless Interest marches off first: But when this wheels about, that follows through a thousand Errors. The Sun has Beams enough not only to fill, but even to dazzle a well-dispos'd Eye; but if a Film crosses the Pupil, or a Cataract interposes between the Chrystal, in Spight of Light the Organ remains

remains in Obscurity, and the Patient finds the Effects of Night, and the Horror of Darkneſs at Mid-day: Thus the Cauſe ſtands with the Underſtanding: I grant thoſe People we talk of would have Proofs ſufficient to content a well-diſpos'd Underſtanding, and ſo have you; but if they are haunted with the Spirit of Diſpute and Obſtinacy, if Intereſt ſtands againſt Creation and God, the Intellect falls preſently into Diſorder, Miſts ariſe, and Fumes interpoſe; and when 'tis thus diſmounted, Evidence by a kind of *Antipariſtaſis* produces Obſtinacy, not Conviction, and rather hardens the Heart, than ſoftens the Brain.

Your ſecond Means is expoſ'd to the ſame Exceptions: I do not queſtion but God can draw a Legion of Demonſtrations from the Conſtitution of the World to evince he made it, which are not within the reach of our Knowledge: Yet if the new-found World Atheiſts are of the ſame Temper with thoſe of our Horizon, they will diſpute their Ground, and never ſurrender, till the Fire of Hell acts upon Senſe, and ſo conveys Truth into the Underſtanding by eternal Sufferings: For as you (againſt the common Vote of Mankind, againſt the plain Conviction of Reaſon) caſt Creation out of Doors, both as needleſs and impoſſible, what hinders them from following your Footſteps, and oppoſing to all Demonſtrations theſe groundleſs Conjectures, that ſupport your Incredulity? If you ſay a Man that dares fly in the Face of Evidence, is a Monster, that he ought rather be caned than argu'd in Reaſon, you are in the Right; but theſe Monsters over-run the World, they are grown ſo common, that they rather pleaſe than aſtoniſh; for now an inflexible Obſtinacy, and a mighty Wit are become Synonymous; and 'tis far more warrantable and modish to ſtand cloſe to Intereſt, than to yield to the Force of Reaſon.

I cannot gueſs why Revelation ſhould prove more effectual, than Demonſtration; theſe inward Lights are always accompany'd with ſome Abſurdity; and though they Illuminate, they leave us in the Dark: An unwary Man may eaſily be deluded, he may miſtake Temptation for Inſpiration, and the Voice of God for the Spirit of Fornication: We remember yet what mad Pranks our Fathers ſaw the laſt Age, when People rebell'd by

divine Impulse, and executed their Prince on a Scaffold by Revelation; when they bled their Fellow-Subjects Purfes, and then their Veins, by the Command of the Spirit; when they transgress'd God's Laws by Providence, and those of Nature by Inspiration: And as Men fanatically inclin'd, take every Impulse of Passion for divine Revelation; so they who love Libertinism look upon Revelation it self as an Illusion, they will admit of nothing Divine, but Sensuality, they examine Truth by the Standard of Pleasure, and whatever baulks Appetite, is Spleen and Vision: One would think the Revelation of the World's Creation made so many Thousand Years ago to *Moses*, is certain almost to Evidence; it has undergone the examen of Ages, and the *Criticism* of obstinate Incredulity, it has triumph'd over Ignorance, conquer'd Malice, and sham'd those it could not convince; I do not see how a particular Revelation can be more persuasive than that which has been put a thousand times to the Test; nor how this can force an Understanding against the Byass of Interest, that will not come over to the other: For still you may run to you old Retrenchment, *The World was possible ab eterno*; therefore it was *ab eterno*; *id est*, you may take Begging the Question for Proving, and Impudence for Reason.

Theo. What think you; if God should take you and me by the Hair, as you fancy an Angel did *Habakuk*, and post us away to the imaginary Spaces above the Empyreum? If he should appear in Majesty, and regale our Sight with a Scene of Creation?

Enseb. Why; I think you would be amazed, but not convinc'd; you mounted an Atheist, and would return one.

Theo. That's strange!

Enseb. 'Tis so indeed; yet not more strange, than that after so many Proofs of a Divinity, you remain in Infidelity: For if God did appear he must borrow some sensible Shape; humane Eyes are too feeble to gaze upon a Spirit: The Glory of a Divinity dazzles them: They sink under the Splendor of the Omnipotent. Now, he has appear'd already under the Form of Fire and Smoak to a whole Army, not able to bear his Majesty, and this Appearance is made so credible, that he who will not believe so many thousand Eyes, must be a Fool to believe

two: Again, how do you know but this World eternally floated (like a swimming Island) in the vast Ocean of those imaginary Spaces? And by a lucky Puff of Chance, or Storm of Atoms, was wafted over to you in the Nick of Time? These Casualties are (I hope) possible: Besides, that unlucky Principle, *ex nihilo nihil fit*, might gravel your Understanding above, as now it does below, for Situation makes no Alteration in Truth or Falsehood; if it be evident here, it will be evident there; and if it appear Sophistry in the New World, why should it pass for Demonstration in the Old? But if this should chance to work upon you, your Fellow Atheists would be where they are, unless God should fall upon new Creations, and cure their Infidelity by condescending to their Pride, and satisfying their Curiosity: But then you would condemn him to a Drudgery more insupportable than that of looking after Flies. He must (it seems) Work, if not for his Living, at least for Adoration: He must fawn on Atheists to deserve their Protection, and serve an Apprenticeship to be acknowledg'd for their Master.

D I A L O G U E XXII

The most plausible Exceptions of Atheists against the World's Creation are refuted.

Enseb. I Have done with my Arguments, which must be very satisfactory, unless you can invalidate them by urgent Reasons, and prove by Evidence *a priori*, or at least from the very Nature and Constitution of the World, that it was impossible to be made: Favour me therefore with a short List of your Reasons, range them (if you please) in Rank and File, draw them up to the best Advantage, and make the most of them; yet I fancy, when all is done, you must establish the World's Eternity by begging heartily, not by proving it; and if I stay, till you evince it by Reason, the World may have an End, before you prove Hazard or Necessity give it a Beginning.

Theo. In the first place; we cannot give the World a beginning without forcing Reason, and imposing on our Understanding. This Doctrine must be supported on the Ruins of first Principles, and whosoever abets it must abjure those great Truths, that Mankind avows to be the Standard and Measure of all others. *Ex nihilo nihil fit* is the common Voice of Nature; 'tis too clear to be prov'd; it shines on the Understanding as the Sun does on our Eyes; and we can as soon find Night at Mid-day, as Fallacy in the Axiom; yet if we admit Creation, we must dash out this Principle, and by the same Authority casheer all others, and then (as blind Men) we shall walk in the Dark, we shall discourse without Rule, argue without Reason, and (like the Dog in the Fable) chop at the Shadow for the Substance, i. e. we shall mistake Falsehood for Truth, and Error for Demonstration.

Secondly, 'Tis an undoubted Maxim in Philosophy, that to bolster up an Opinion, we must not multiply things without Necessity, *Non sunt multiplicanda antea sine Necessitate*. Now there is no need to forge an infinite Being, for the World might be of it self *ab aeterno*: The most subtle Logician in the World, can never make it appear, that the *Hypothesis* implies a Contradiction in *Terminis*, or even by Inference. To what purpose do we entangle our selves in Difficulties? Why do we frame an omnipotent, wise, and just Creator, with a thousand other pompous Titles, both unintelligible and frightful? Have Fears and Apprehensions such ravishing Charms? Cannot our Understandings be pleas'd, unless they are *Nonplus'd*? Nor be satisfied, unless we hang them on the Tenters.

Thirdly, A Thousand Parts of the Universe seem not only superfluous, but noxious: They are too vile even to make a Show, and are only fit to increase the Number of Creatures, so that they reach not the Quality of Mutes, that serve (at least) for Pomp and Ostentation: Yet were they barely without Employment, without Station or Design, I would let them lie quiet in the State of Idleness, but alas, they were Executioners by Nature, as well as Office, and enter into the World to plague it: For Example, if there were a God, can you imagine he would so far abase his Power, or prostitute his Wisdom,

as to produce *Lice* and *Fleas*? That he would foul his Fingers with *Toads*? Or condemn his Omnipotence to dig *Flies* out of Dunghills? Methinks it would suit better with three grand Attributes of a Deity, *Power*, *Wisdom*, and *Goodness*, to clear the World of these Plagues, than to stock it: Plagues I call them, for their very End is Mischief: Some torment a Man, others kill him, and the least troublesome molest him. You know, Sir, what a Figure *Domitian* makes in Story, for his unbecoming Diversions; if it be beneath a Man to slay Vermin, 'tis certainly below God to make them. Had I an Inclination to believe the World was made, I would turn *Manichean*, and rather admit two first Principles than one: Now if these Insects were not created, why should I admit a creating Principle of any thing else? Come, Sir, Let us say rather, all things were of themselves, than vote God the Dudgey of making them. They are below the Care of an infinite Majesty, and the Power of the Omnipotent. I am persuaded 'tis less irrational to deny a God, than to assign him the most sordid Employments; first, of producing *Lice*, *Fleas*, and *Toads*, and then of conserving them. I have many other Exceptions against your Opinion; but these suffice to discard it even of Probability.

Esseb. You have propos'd your Difficulties, I will return an Answer. To the first, indeed a Man cannot persuade himself the World was the Product of Necessity or Chance, without affronting Reason, and tricking his Understanding: To ally those infinite Perfections of Eternity and Independence, with the Vileness of creeping Insects, is to bring to one Centre, Extrems that can never meet: 'Tis to raise Vermin above their Level, and pull down those vast Perfections below theirs: 'Tis to invest *Toads* and *Frogs* with the Appurtenances of the Divinity, and to cloath 'em, like the *Daw* in the Fable, with gaudy Plumes that belong to another: But when we make God Author of the World, we stumble upon no Absurdity: For tho' the World be a stately Work, yet I conceive it neither surpasses the Power, nor the Skill of a most powerful, and most wise Artist. *Omnipotence* has certainly an excellent Knack at making, and an *infinite Wisdom* at contriving. Seeing therefore the Perfection of the Work is not above the Abilities of the Architect, we

do not on this Account transgress any known Principle if we ascribe it to him.

Indeed by admitting Creation, I banish your *ex nihilo nihil fit*, from the Number of Principles; but I do not at all intrench upon Nature, nor encroach upon the Prerogative of the Understanding by out-lawing it: 'Tis guilty of Intrusion; and holds the Place by the Favour of Ignorance: Those People who first Principled it, were without Principles themselves, they knew not the extent of Omnipotence, nor invaded its Privileges. An omnipotent Power can do any thing that is possible, *i. e.* that implies not a Contradiction: Show me (if you can) a Contradiction that an All-powerful Being should make something without the Help of previous Matter; if you cannot, your Principle is justly degraded: Nor will other Maxims be involv'd in its Disgrace; they'll keep their Post in spite of Opposition, and receive Submission from Reason, where-e'er they meet it: But if you suffer your Maxim to be restrain'd, and not let it ramble into the other World, I'll embrace it with open Arms, as *Ocellus* and *Aristotle* did: Yet in this Case it will signify no more than that all natural Generations suppose a Subject; and in this Sense I say of your Principle, what one said of *Euclid's* first Demonstration; *They were so plain, that an Ass could not miss them*: In a Word, *ex nihilo nihil fit*. Nature can give Being and Life to no new Productions unless she has a Subject to work on: In this Point she has no Prerogative above a Carver, tho' in the other she far exceeds, for her Works are more fine and delicate; she gives Life, the other's Skill stops at Figure: But if we look upon God, your Principle is out of Doors; he cannot only work on Matter, but make it: This argues, you'll say, an Excess of Power: 'Tis true, but yet it does not out-stretch Omnipotence.

To the Second, I answer, your Argument falters in every Part; it proves too much, and by Consequence just nothing: It stands for either side of the Contradiction, and therefore supports neither. For as you argue thus, *'Twas possible for the World to exist of it self, therefore we must not father it upon any superior Agent*: So by the same Logick I may conclude, that either all the Materials, that compose *London* rang'd themselves in that fine Order we see them, or that Chance and Hazard blunder'd upon it, because either way is possible: Nay, methinks your

Argument

Argument pleads for any Absurdity: 'Tis possible for stones to speak, therefore for ought we know they do when they are alone, and if they keep Silence in our Company, 'tis out of the same Policy Baboons were mute in America, (as the *Indians* told the *Spaniards*,) viz. to avoid their Cruelty. 'Tis possible for an excellent Watch to start up from a casual Combination of Atoms; let us therefore out-law *Tompion*, and transport the whole Company of Watch-makers into *Virginia* to plant *Tobacco*; their Art is superfluous in *England*, as well as their Persons, since Possibility has set up Shop, Watches will pour in upon us by Thousands, we may take them up as the *Jews* did Quails, and when we have made our own Provision, pleasure a Friend with half a Dozen.

Theo. You are in a Vein of Pleasantry, but Arguments are seldom laught out of Countenance. If Possibility be a weak Proof, Mirth is a feeble Solution.

Euseb. You wrong me, Sir, I am as serious as the Matter will bear, and if my Discourse has any thing of Mirth, you are beholden to the Subject for the Diversion. A Buffoon under a grave Disguise, may be mistaken for a venerable Alderman, but when he is cas'd, the Alderman retires to make room for Scaramouch. To treat Fooleries with Respect, is to misplace Ceremony, and not to lay them open, is but a Degree from abetting them.

Theo. If Contempt can baffle an Argument, the most strict Demonstrations are not secure: By your leave, Sir, you either mistake the stress of my Reason, or sling in a handful of piquant Railleries to evade it: Pray attend; from this Antecedent, *'Twas possible for the World to be ab eterno a se*, this Inference follows, therefore it did exist: For if the World was possible *ab eterno*, 'tis a necessary and independent Being, but 'tis evident that a necessary and independent Being is Eternal, therefore if the World were possible *ab eterno*, 'tis manifest it did exist *a se ab eterno*; and therefore, all Recourse to a Deity is vain and superfluous. What Absurdity can be found in so plain a Discourse, but that a Man of Wit did not comprehend it?

Euseb. Your Arguments with these Amendments is still defective; it proves not at all the Question, but impudently begs it. For it amounts to this, that the World was *ab eterno*, therefore it was *ab eterno*. If you intend

to make any thing of your *Enthymem*, prove first the Antecedent, and then we will consider what is to be done with the Consequence. Now I have already prov'd the World could not possibly exist *ab æterno* (as you suppose) without any other Proof than a bare Assertion. In the mean time, methinks this Argument proves as forcibly the Contradiction of your *Thesis*; *'Twas not possible for the World to exist of it self ab æterno*, therefore it did not. You will put me without doubt to the Proof of the Antecedent, and with Reason; for till that be establish'd, nothing can be concluded: But then the same talk lies on your Hands, and till you have evinc'd that *'twas possible for the World to exist of it self ab æterno*, your Conclusion must lie dormant.

To the third I answer: To pronounce on things at Random, either marks a great Pride, or a superlative Ignorance: You cannot judge which Springs are useful in a Watch, which are superfluous, unless you comprehend the Frame of that artificial Fabrick; and certainly you would conclude very ill, that such a Wheel was needless, because you did not understand its Office. The World is a curious Engine compos'd of Ten Millions of secret Springs, do you know the Nature of each? If you do not, pray dissect them, and expose the Anatomy to our Contemplation? If you do, you are unfit to sit on the Bench; your Sentence is both rash and erroneous, and you deserve to stand at the Bar for having disgrac'd the Tribunal. You must remember this Axiom of St. Thomas, *Perfecta Bonitas in rebus creatis, non inveniretur, nisi esset ordo Bonitatis*; the Perfection of Creatures would be defective, if there were no Degrees, no Order of Perfection: We should tarnish the Lustre and impair the Beauty of the Universe, if we diminish'd the Multitude, or temper'd the Disproportion of so many Things, that by a most admirable Dissention, and a most concordant Discord conspire to the Grace and Harmony of the whole: Had you been call'd to Counsel by the Maker of the World, you would have persuaded him to frame it all of Gold or Diamonds; as that unskilful Painter, who not being able to copy out the charming Features of *Helen*, hid them together with his Ignorance under an embroidered Manteau, and so instead of a fair Woman, drew nothing but shining Drapery. No Creature is superfluous, that

that can proclaim its great Master's Glory and Majesty; this is a noble Employment, worthy of the Seraphims, yet not above the Capacity of *Flies* and *Spiders*. Vile Insects are quickned by the Almighty, and nothing but an Omnipotent Hand can frame them: The Power of your *Alexanders* and *Cæsars*, was never able to breath Life into a Worm: The one pillag'd the *East* indeed, and welter'd in Blood and Slaughter of Innocents; the other like a Tempest swept all the *West* before him; yet after they had butcher'd a Million of Men, they were not able to give Life to a Catterpillar: Besides, how dare you term these poor Creatures idle, of whom God makes use to confound the Pride of Atheists, and to read continual Lessons of Humility to all Men? These Gentlemen are incredulous, because they over-rate their Part; they suppose, if there were a God, their piercing Wits would make strange Discoveries, and because the Majesty of a Deity dazles their battish Eye-sight, they rather chuse to plunge into Infidelity, than to acknowledge their Ignorance: To cure this insolent Frenzy, God has flung these puny Creatures in your way; he bids you examine the fine Contexture of each Part if you can, the Use of every Muscle, the Nature of their Souls, and of all those hidden Springs that cause Life and Motion; and when you have learnt this *A, B, C*, it will be time enough to ascend to more sublime Contemplation. Now, Sir, neither you, nor the greatest Philosopher that ever breath'd, can give a tolerable Account of the most despicable Insect: You know neither its Nature, nor half its Properties: You are as ill inform'd of its Causes, as of its Effects; and the various Systems of Generation and Corruption are but so many Demonstrations of God's Power, and Man's Weakness. So that God lays before you these Vermin as a Remedy against Pride, and what is more, against Atheism: He blunts those Darts you level against him by interposing *Flies* and *Lice*; he disarms your Insolence, and strikes out of your Hands those Arguments you imploy against him. I cannot (say you) comprehend God; an infinite Being passes my Conception; therefore *there is no such Thing*: You might as well infer, That all you see is nothing but a Scene of Fallacy and Illusion; that you and I, are mere Fantasms and Spectres, the Product of Imagination; for there is not one single thing in the whole

whole Mass of Creation, you comprehend. Your Understanding falls under the Weight of a Straw, you cannot tell whether it has Parts or no Parts, before the Division; you know neither the Nature of a Stone, nor the Properties of a Worm; you are a Stranger even in your own House; though you Think, Speak, and Move; Thoughts, Speech, and Motion puzzle you; we have Assurance indeed there is such things, but if we press the Inquiry a little farther, we must expect small Satisfaction. What Man (who finds his Understanding pos'd by such ordinary and trivial Instances, who flags under the Consideration of almost nothing) will be so bold, and at the same time so foolish as to question God's Existence, because he cannot comprehend it? Now, though all those things you are pleas'd to call idle, had no other End, but to gravel the great Pretenders to Omniscience to confound their Pride, and to heal their unreasonable Incredulity by Induction, they would render very good Service both to their deluded Fellow-Creatures, and to their omnipotent Creator.

Besides, we have a particular Tendernefs, as well as Value for our Bodies; we rack our Thoughts, and even torment our Consciences to please them; they must be pamper'd at the Expence of our Souls, tho' they burn for the Debauch hereafter. To cure this raging Transport, God applies a loathsome, but sovereign Remedy: He shews us what our idoliz'd Bodies are by the Infection of *Lice*, *Worms*, and *Toads* they produce: And oftentimes this humbling Spectacle of Mortality frights us more effectually to our Duty, than the Prospect of the tormenting Instruments of Fire and Brimstone, Darkness and Despair. Did these poor Gentlemen, who whine away at a Female's Feet their Happiness, Money, and Souls too, but seriously consider, that the Object of their Worship must once become Food to those vile Creatures you both condemn and abhor; that those Eyes they admire to Adoration, will once set in Dust, and be drown'd in Putrefaction; that those Cheeks (that Frenzy stiles the Seat of the *Graces*) will be transform'd, not only into the Throne, but even into the Nature of *Toads*, *Worms*, and *Serpents*; did they (I say) but consider these obvious, but moving Truths, they would remove their Affections to those noble Objects, and then they would confess Vermin is more useful than they imagin'd.

Again,

Again, all these Creatures have many useful Properties we know, and more we know not : *Lice*, *Snails*, and *Worms* are Remedies for some Diseases, and I have been acquainted with those who admir'd a Ragout of *Maggots*. If *Toads* and *Vipers* are poisonous, they also afford Antidotes against Poison ; and if sometimes they kill, they as often save. A Soupe of *Vipers* is a Medicine both moist and wholesome ; it sweetens the Blood, and inspirits it. Certainly things endow'd with such excellent Qualities are neither superfluous nor idle : No, no ! They both benefit the World, and adorn it. *Deus*, says *S. Austin*, *Lib. 11. de Civ. Cap. 22. ita artifex magnus in magnis est, ut minor non sit in parvis, quæ parva non sua granditate quæ nulla est, sed artificis sapientia metienda est*, God is so great a Workman in great things, that he is not less in small ones ; they are not to be measured by their Greatness, because they have none, but by the Wisdom of the Artist.

In fine, to conclude with *William Bishop of Paris*, *Nascitur aranea cum lege, libro 6 lucerna*. God has instructed all Creatures in every Point of their Duty : The very *Spider* brings into the World its Rules, Book, and Torch, and knows its Lesson as soon as 'tis able to learn it. At the first Signal of the Omnipotent, they all fall to work : The *Bee* makes innocent Inroads upon Flowers, the *Silk-worm* spins out its own Entrails, and weaves Royal Robes for Princes, the Fish sport in the Waters, the Beasts of Service expect the Commands of their Masters, and small Seeds, tho' dead, give Life to Trees, which bring Men both Pleasure and Profit. Nothing is idle ; nothing refractory in the World but Men, who abuse their Liberty to their Shame, and mispend the precious Moments of their Lives to their eternal Ruin.

From the Superfluities of Insects you step over to their Vileness ; and indeed, if the first Fault were prov'd home, I would say guilty to the other. For certainly a thing too inconsiderable to fill any Office in the vast Empire of the Universe, must be meanly provided with Abilities. I suppose, Sir, your Apprehension takes the just Measure of Things, that it never over-flourishes Objects, but agrees exactly with the Pattern : Your Judgment is squar'd by the Model in the Apprehension, and if this be exact, that cannot well be mistaken ; Now I have heard Gold shines

shines very gloriously on your Head, and that you fancy Diamonds sparkle more in your Cabinet, than in that of the great *Mogul*: These things you judge neither below your Care, nor your Esteem; and should I venture to call them a base Lumber, vile Minerals, or childish Trifles, you would suspect my Prudence: Yet all the Diamonds of the *Golconda Mines*, all the Oar of *Potosi* falls short of the Perfection of the vilest Animal. Gold may shine, but cannot breath; Diamonds may glitter, but cannot move; an Insect crawls in a more elevated Sphere; it lives, and this sole Prerogative is above the Reach and Capacity of Metal; indeed these things are handsomely varnished; and 'tis the Colour alone that justifies your Esteem; and makes some Atonement for your Dotage. If therefore you have not quite forsaken Reason, either esteem Gold or Jewels less, or Insects more; if those are vile, you must think of a new World to express the Baseness of the other.

I cannot dismiss this Argument, till I have brought the Epicurean Part of it to examen. 'Tis below the Majesty of God (you say) to extend his Care to the Direction and Conservation of such despicable Creatures; and then very philosophically you infer he does not; but because this does not serve your Turn, you advance a Step, and tell us they may as well come into the World without his Help, as continue without it.

Your Argument is built on a false *Hypothesis*; there is no Creature despicable in the whole Universe but the proud Atheist, who thinks so. Harken to *Aristotle*, who saw as far into Nature as any of our Libertines, lib. 1. *de Partu Animal*, cap. 5. *Viliorum animalium rationem proportionemque puerili Fastidio sprevisse dignum nequaquam est, cum nulla sit res Naturæ, in qua non mirandum aliquid inditum habeatur*: To slight the Oeconomy and Perfection of the most imperfect Animal is childish, seeing there is nothing in Nature so minute and inconsiderable, that has not some Qualities worthy of Admiration. The Vileness of the most abject Worm, consists not in the Perfection it possesses, but in those it wants: 'Tis relatively so; and in this Sense, every limited Being is superlatively Vile, if compar'd with the boundless Perfection of the Creator. But if we consider them in themselves, they participate some faint Rays of Divine Perfections; they are the

Effects

Effects of his Power, and Objects of his Love, for had their Natures no Similitude with the Perfections of God, he could not have produc'd them ; and did he not love them, he would not : Now to make them worthy both of his Power and Love, and not of his Care, is ridiculous and impious. Indeed did we travesty God into a Shepherd (as the Poets did *Apollo*;) did we suppose he left his Godhead in Heaven, to feed Flocks on Earth, or that he took up his Habitation with Pismires, or lodg'd in Dunghills with Worms, your Objection would appear reasonable ; but we must cast off these Anthropomorphite Principles. To act on Earth, he needs not abandon Heaven ; nor dispatch Couriers to intimate his Orders, or Deputies to execute 'em ; he is as necessarily in all Places, as in all Times : He created all things without Labour, and conserves them without Solitude. The Management of the World neither takes one Grain from his Happiness, nor adds one ; he is as much at Leisure since its Creation as before ; and though he be without *Embarass*, he is never Idle. Besides, though we cannot dabble in Pitch without being defil'd, that Aphorism of the wise Man concerns not him ; he shines in Mire, glitters in Dirt, and like the Sun gilds corrupted Carcases, without being tainted or sullied. I therefore conclude your Philosophy is of the same Piece with your Divinity ; and both are drawn from the Original of *Epicures* : They are too foolish, methinks, to trepan a wise Man, and too blasphemous to engage a good Man ; and indeed I am half persuaded you laugh at his System in your Heart, tho' you applaud it in publick, and would easily desert his Belief, if you could enjoy (without Remorse) the Benefit of condescending Moralities.

Theo. Come, Sir, you have harangu'd enough upon this Subject : Methinks the Chamber begins to smell of Vermin, we have been upon an uncleanly Topick : To discourse of *Worms*, *Toads*, and *Maggots*, looks like treading Eels out of Mud ; they are unphilosophical Employments, and we will commit the farther Discussion of the Poet to a Committee of *Gold-finders*, or a Club of *Rake-kennels*.

D I A.

D I A L O G U E XXIII.

The Seventh Proof. The palpable Absurdities which follow from no G O D, demonstrate there is one.

Ensch. I Omit many other Arguments that plead most powerfully for a God; in this Number we may place Miracles and Prophecies. If ever there were a Miracle, all the Atheists fine *Hypotheses* fall to the Ground, all the Leaves in *Windfor Forest* will not be able to hide the Folly of his Incredulity; for if ever a dead Man has been brought back to Life, it must have been done by a Power above the Energy of Natural Causes: To revive a dead Man, is as hard as to infuse Life into Marble, and I think all the Abilities of Nature can never reach this Operation. Now that such Miracles have been wrought in the World, may be made out by as plain Evidence, as the Nature of past Matters of Fact require, *i. e.* by unquestionable Authority, and more can neither rationally be expected nor desired.

Again, to foretel things that depend merely upon the Exercise of our Free-Will, is a manifest Argument of a God, for an Understanding that can foresee what will happen, by the same Perspicacity must know what has happen'd, and *a fortiori*, whatever does actually happen; and by consequence whatever can be known. Now such a vast extent of knowledge can only suit with a Being infinitely perfect, at least far superior to Man: For as *Pindar* takes Notice, *Ad futura cæcutiunt mentes humana*, Future Events lie out of the Sphere of humane Understandings. We see nothing but Obscurity and Darknels before us; we cannot tell what Changes, what Revolutions of Designs may be made in our Breasts before to Morrow; much less what other Men will say or do a hundred Years hence. Whence the Latins call Fore-telling of things, *Divinatio*, as if it was the peculiar Privilege of the Divinity: And the Prophet *Isaiah* bids the Gods of the Heathens prove their Title to Worship by Prophecy. *Enunciate quæ ventura sunt in futurum, & sciemus quia Dii estis vos.*

Now it is clear beyond dispute, that Men have foretold future Events with all their Circumstances; which they could not do, by the Force of human Wit and Industry: Therefore, they receiv'd the Faculty from another who can dive into Futurities, and discover all the Windings and *Meanders* of the Hearts of Men to come, as well as of those who are, and have been. I will cull out two or three Prophecies of a hundred which may be found in our Scripture, and desire you to spend a cool and impartial Thought upon them. 1. *Reg. cap. 13.* whilst *Jeroboam* sacrific'd on an Altar to *Baal*, a Prophet cry'd out, *Altare, Altare, hæc dicit Dominus, ecce Filius nascetur domui David, Josias Nomine, & immolabit super te Sacerdotes excelforum, qui nunc in te thura succendunt, & ossa hominum in te incendent.* This happen'd exactly 361 Years after the Prophet *Isaiah*, c. 41. foretells the Empire of *Cyrus* and his Name 200 Years before he was Born. *Daniel* the Subversion of the *Chaldean* Monarchy, the Grandeur of the *Median*, *Persian*, *Grecian*, and *Roman* Empires: Nay, he descends to particular Accidents, so that he seems rather to compile a Story of past, than a Prophecy of future Transactions; yet the Event runs even with his Prediction, 'tis true to a Letter, and therefore to Admiration. Now this alone wounds Atheism mortally, and stabs its grand Principle, *There is no God.* For this Discourse is most certain, *Nothing in Nature is able to foresee things which depend merely upon the Free-Will of Man, and will happen some Ages after: But 'tis certain that Men have foreseen things that depended on the Free-Will of Man, and did happen several Ages after they were foretold, therefore, there is an Intelligent Being above Nature.* You can only evade the Force of the Argument by denying the Matter of Fact; but when you strike upon an evident Absurdity, and must call in all Records, there is not any Story in the World more Authentick, than that of the Scripture: Now to disbelieve all History out of Fear of being impos'd on, is to play the Fool with Caution, and to stretch Wariness into Stupidity. I intend not to descant on those two Proofs, nor to draw them up to their full Advantage; confront them at leisure, with History both sacred and profane; compare the Text with Events, push on the Examen not only to Exactness, but to the Extremity of Criticism, only stop within the Terms

Terms of Reason, and expect no greater Evidence than things past will bear: Do not first pass Sentence, and then examine Evidences, first condemn, and then inquire into the Merits of the Cause, and I am confident you will confess, things have been both done and foretold, that come not within the reach of Nature; and therefore you will be oblig'd to acknowledge there is something that commands Nature, and calls those things (that are not) by their Name, as well as those that are.

Theo. I will take into Consideration your Proposals in due Time; but pray read us the Register of Absurdities: This is your present Task, and I am impatient to hear it.

Euseb. I shall open my Indictment with an Accusation able to make a Man's Ears tingle, notwithstanding your Tenets are guilty of the Impeachment. There is no God (you say) no Providence to watch over the Children of Men, no Goodness to reward Vertue, no Justice to punish Vice; hope of a future Bliss is but a pleasing Imagination, Fear of Torments but a vain Bugbear invented by Melancholy, and improv'd by Custom; does not this accur'd Doctrine open the Gate to Pride, Arrogance, and Tyranny? Does it not let in upon us Perfidiousness, Perjury, and Sacrilege? Does it not invite Mankind to turn off Shame? To cashier Modesty? To plunge into the Mire of Lasciviousness? And, in short, to break off all Commerce, all Correspondence with Neighbours, Friends, and Relations? Now can any thing be imagin'd more absurd, than to father such horrid, such universal Corruptions on the first greatest and supream Truth? This all Atheists do. For as the prime Verity (if there be a God) is, *There is a God*, who rules, directs, and governs the Universe; so if there be none, that must be degraded, and this substituted in its Place, *There is no God* who rules, directs, and governs the Universe; but this Truth will extinguish Fear, and stifle Reverence; it lets loose the whole crowd of Passions, and exposes the World to Pilgrimage and Rapine; for Men void of Fear, are void of Restraint, and so set up Appetite for the Standard of all their Actions.

Secondly, It will follow, that a Falsehood, an Impossibility, a mere Chymera is the Cause of Religion, of Justice, Temperance, and Modesty; that it is the Founda-

tion of Peace, Concord, and the very Basis that supports all well ordered Common-wealths ; for the Persuasion of Deity, the Fear of his Anger, and Hope of his Mercy, move Men more than civil Rewards or Punishments. Now is it not down-right Madness, to think that a Chymera, a mere Fiction, that has no Being, but in some deluded Brain, should countenance Vertue, and persuade it ? Should discountenance Vice, and load it with Shame and Infamy ; whereas the prime Truth in the Atheist's Catechism, *There is no God*, leads Men into all Abominations.

Thirdly, It will follow, that Wisdom stifles Vertue, and Error cherishes it ; for if there be no God, it's Error and Folly to believe there is one, 'tis a Piece of Wisdom to stand up and protest against a Forgery, so prejudicial to Truth, Reason, and Sensuality : It's a Piece of Wisdom to maintain that Truth, and Wisdom are Plagues, not only to particular Men, but even to Societies ; that they crown Kingdoms in Deluges of Corruption, and cut off the Bands of Unity, that knit the Parts together ; that they must be clapt under the Hatches, and condemn'd to Darkness and Confinement, as Traytors to Humanity, and Rebels to Government : But then on the other Side, it follows, that Error and Ignorance support Commerce, maintain Tranquility, and enliven Society ; that they are to be promoted as the Source and Origin of all Good, that they enlighten the Understanding, polish the Will, and not only render People Wise, but Good.

Fourthly, That all those Heroes who have been famous, either for Learning or Piety, were wretchedly mistaken in a thing of the highest Concern : They fell down before an airy Statue of God, forg'd in the Brain, struck out of Error, and shap'd by Vision, Custom, and Education : Whilst Men, unprovided of Wit, destitute of Conscience, of profligate Lives, and of worse Principles, burthensome to their Countries, and scandalous to their very Species, unravel the Truth, and unmask the grand Imposture : Before a Man can believe so potent an Absurdity, he must turn off Reason, and conclude that the worst of Men were the best ; the most illiterate, the most wise ; and those who have ever justly been esteem'd Monsters, the only Ornaments of our Kind.

Fifthly, That to pay Homage and Obedience to God, to fear Punishment, or hope for Reward, are foolish and vain Actions, and wholly opposite to Reason: For to revere, worship, and tremble at a Chymera, is both childish and ridiculous. It's unreasonable and impious into the Bargain: If therefore God sits on the same Level with an Impossibility, if he has no other Being, than what a deluded Understanding is pleased to give him, he is no more to be valued, than all those impossible Combinations that are spawn'd by Fancy, and crawl in the Imagination.

Sixthly, That Impiety, Sacrilege, and Blasphemy, are laudable Actions, and agreeable to the most inviolable Dictates of Reason. For if there be no God, all the Actions that fly in his Face, that attack his imaginary and usurp'd Grandeur are good: *First*, Because they are publick Protestations of a Truth, *viz.* *That there is a God.* And, *Secondly*, Because they are efficacious Means to disabuse Mankind, and to withdraw it from the erroneous Persuasions of a Deity and Providence. Pray, Sir, tell me, are not these most dismal Consequences? Are they not able to chill the Blood? And to cast Humanity into Convulsions? They cannot be thought on without Horror, nor believ'd without Fury. Had I a Hand in the Government, or any Power with the *Commons*, I would bring all the Abettors of those lewd Tenets within the Statutes of Treason. They tend directly to the Subversion of Order and Discipline. When Men believe so loose Principles, their Actions cannot be regular. Nothing but want of Occasions to be Villains can plead for their Honesty: Impotence alone is the guard of their Innocence, and of their Neighbour's Safety.

Theo. You are smart upon Atheists, and methinks intend to hector them into Religion, rather than convince them. But, Sir, a little Reason goes farther than much Satyr, they are Men of Mettle, and dare look a Rhodomontade in the Face: They will not be frighted out of their Opinion with Buckram Invective.

Enseb. Did you see a Rascal ready to set Fire to your House; or a Bravo making at your Breast with a drawn Sword, in such Exigencies you would lay aside Formality and Ceremony: And I suppose such extraordinary Circumstances would easily justify a little Smartness. This is our present Case. By denying a Deity, you pull

up all Restraint, you let loose the whole Kennel of Vices, and hollow in Pride, Rapine, and Cruelty, to worry us; you do not only lop off the Branches of Subordination and Government, but tear them up by the Roots, and undermine the very Foundation of Society: We cannot carry on any Commerce, nor live in any Corporation, without trusting sometimes our Neighbour: For it is impossible to make all Matters so sure, as to leave nothing to Honesty and Honour. Trust is the Ground, the Basis and first Principle of Commerce; without this, we must stand at Defiance with all the World, and place Security in our Power alone. Now if there be no Superior to awe us, no Principle within us that points out Good and Evil, it's absurd and foolish to trust any Man; for there is no Ground for such a Confidence in your *Hypothesis*, nothing that can persuade a Man to sacrifice his Interest to Truth and Justice.

For if there be no God, Man is his own Law, and therefore can offend no Body but himself; nay, nor can he offend himself; for if he be supream, whatever he does is right. Let him contrive Plots against Church and State; let him worry the Innocent, or prey upon the Poor, he remains Loyal, tho' plung'd in Treasons; spotless, tho' dipt in Blood; and without Sin, though loaded with Crimes. Now such Doctrine must of Necessity unhinge Society, and turn Kingdoms into Heaps of Rubbish, and Piles of Confusion; for it withdraws all those Props that sustain Obedience, and breaks those Bands that cement Unity. A Man must be made of Ice not to express some Concern at the Approach of so threatening a Danger.

Theo. Of what Danger?

Enseb. Of our Lives and Fortunes; for nothing can secure them but the Impotence of Atheists. We are out-law'd by your Principles already; and should quickly be lap'd on the Gallows, did your Power correspond with your Intentions, at least to your Maxims. But your Forces are dispers'd; they are canton'd in Taverns and Bawdy-houses, and its hard to draw them into a Body; so that the Government stands, because you want strength to overturn it: We enjoy Liberty, because you cannot enslave us; and our Estates, because you dare not invade them.

Theo. These are reflecting Hints, and rather plead for Civility than a God; I had rather connive at the Affront

than Revenge it ; and attribute it rather to Heat than Advertence.

Enseb. Under Favour, Sir, tho' your Tenets raise my Indignation, I think they deserve it ; yet Passion has not dimm'd my Understanding : I speak with Reflection ; and if my Discourse displease you, thank your Principles for the Mortification. I say again, if there be no God, Man has no Superior ; if he has no Superior, he can be subject to no Law ; he can neither do well nor ill ; for Good and Evil are relative Denominations, and suppose a Law that prohibits the one, and either commands or counsels the other ; if he can do no ill, and is persuaded of this impeccable Prerogative, why shall he not glut his Ambition with Treasons and Murders ? His Avarice with Rapines ? And his Incontinence with his Prostitutions ? These Actions sit very easy on Conscience ; they spaw on Sense, and charm Nature ; nay, according to your grand Maxim, they deserve the Name of Vertues, as well as Obedience, Justice, or Chastity ; and are more easily practis'd than forbore : Indeed, tho' you be neither under the Restraint of Natural Laws nor Divine, Civil Law may fright you sometimes from the Practice ; for Atheists of all Men dote on their Skin, they love not to make a publick Intrado into the *Old Baily*, nor to be carted in Ceremony to *Hyde-Park-Corner*. But then what Government can be secure, when Subjects obey merely for want of an opportunity to Rebel ? And are only Innocent, when Interest forbids them to be Guilty ?

Theo. This is an odious Subject, pray let us step over it ; I am afraid you will turn Evidence, if Passion carries you a little farther, and I may be put to the Exigence of solving Difficulties at the Bar. I will now return an Answer to your most material Objection. You say, if there be no God, that Justice, Temperance, Modesty, and Obedience flow from a mere Chymera ; that Fiction, Imposture, and Falsehood support Society ; this you storm at and throw it among the first Class of Absurdities : But pray reflect, that Ignorance and Policy at *Rome* and *Athens* set up a Multiplicity of Gods, they carv'd Idols of all Sizes, and of all Creatures ; they persuaded the Vulgar that their mute Statues punish'd Vice, and rewarded Vertue. This Imposture cheated many into Justice, Chastity, and Obedience. You cannot deny, but Deities

were imaginary, that they were as void of Sense, as of Reason, and were so far from being able either to protect their Profelytes, or chastise their Enemies, that they could not defend themselves. In fine, Sir, they were *Nothing*, yet these *Nothings*, these *Chymera's* scar'd People into their Duty, and aw'd them into Heroick Flights of Morality. If the Persuasion of a God (tho' there be no such Thing) works the same Effects, where lies the Absurdity? If Falsehood, two thousand Years ago, gull'd People into Submission, and wheedled them into Vertue, it may play over again the same Game in our Age; we are liable to Ignorance, as well as the *Athenians* or *Romans*, and what either quicken'd their Hopes, or enliven'd their Fears, may make Impression upon ours.

Enseb. I confess, that the Persuasion of the ancient Pagans was erroneous, and false in particular, but not in general: They acknowledg'd a Deity who look'd into Human Affairs, and who would once exact a strict Account of their most minute Actions; so far they were right, but then when they applied this Notion of a God to Stocks or Stones, to wicked Men, or accursed *Demons*, they deviated from Truth: The Principle therefore of these Men was true, *viz.* *A God*; But the Application of it to *Jupiter*, *Mars*, or *Venus* was erroneous; for these were Persons of most profligate Morals: The first, an Adulterer; the second, a Murtherer; and the third, a most impudent Harlot. So that neither the Attributes of a Divinity, nor the Management of the World, nor the Vengeance of ill Actions, nor the Reward of good ones belong'd to them. Now when Men abstain'd from Immorality out of Fear of offending God, or practis'd Vertue out of Desire to please him, they were not mov'd by this Persuasion, that there was a supream Being, who hated ill, and lov'd good; and would punish that, and reward this, which universal Persuasion is most true; and Vertue that stands on this Principle, has no *Chymera* to support it: Indeed they clap the Divinity on Men, invested Devils with its great Prerogatives, and worship'd those Gods of their own Institution; and so blunder'd about the particular Subject of Adoration, notwithstanding they retain'd the Notion of a Deity able to chastise the wicked, and so had a kind of true Foundation of Political and Moral Vertue: But if there be no God, or if he mews

himself up in Heaven, without entring into our Concerns, the very Foundation of all Probity, all Subordination is false and fictitious, and by consequence, all Trust, Commerce, Piety, and Society are sustain'd by Imposture and Forgery, which is an Opinion so unkind to our very Nature, and so irrational, that no Man can abett it without Folly and Madness.

A Gentleman of the Company interrupted *Ensebius*. Sir, said he, I confess your Arguments have Force; they are Rational, and a Man must be very hard to please that will not relish them. But unless our Souls are immortal, what Reason have Men either to Love his Goodness, or to Fear his Severity? His Blessing must stop with our Breath, and his Curses cannot overtake us in Eternity: For if Death robs us of Life and Being, all our Hopes and Fears are at a stand: They disappear with our last Sigh, and vanish into nothing. So that the Doctrine of a God is not sufficient alone to reform Mankind, and all Religion may be regarded as useless, or flung among the Ceremonies Divines term *Diophora*; for if my Soul be Mortal, future Rewards are impossible, as well as Torments: Why then should I court Vertue at the Expence of present Satisfaction? Or withstand Appetite with the Forfeiture of Pleasure? Why should I bridle Lust, or prescribe Bounds to my Ambition? If neither Continence be regarded, nor Pride humbled? For my part I own ingeniously, I shall make the best use of Time, till I am sure there is an Eternity. I shall trim up my House of Clay, and lay out my Stock on Reparations: My Passions shall live at Discretion, and range without Controul.

If my Arguments convince you that there is a God (replied *Ensebius*) you cannot question the Immortality of the Soul. God, and the Immortality of the Soul are Correlatives, and whatever Proof makes for the one, establishes the other: For as I hinted above, if there be a God, he is Just, and therefore crowns Vertue, and revenges Vice: Now it is evident, that the Just oftentimes in this Life receive no Reward, and the Impious no Punishment, therefore they must receive it in the next; therefore our Souls must not Die with our Bodies; therefore they are Immortal. Again, if our Souls are Immortal, there is a God. For supposing this noble Pre-
rogative

rogative, which way did the Soul come by it, but by the Goodness and Power of an infinite Agent? It can neither be the Effect of Matter nor Motion; these Things are below the Level of a Spirit, they have neither Life nor Knowledge; how can they infuse into another those Perfections that are Strangers to themselves? Did our Souls steal a Being from all Eternity? Where were they before they enter'd our Bodies? Who ordered my Soul to take Possession of my Body, rather than of another? Or where did it hover before it found the Settlement? I suppose *Pythagoras's Metempsychosis* is grown out of Fashion in *Europe*, we send Souls no more on Expeditions of Knight-Errantry; they scorn to take up with Swine, or to lodge with Camels and Elephants. If therefore they are immortal Spirits, you cannot avoid a Creator; neither Hazard Motion, or Matter can give us a good Account of their Origin.

Eusebius desir'd another Meeting the next Day, to put an end to the Conference. One Session, said he, addressing himself to the Company, will compleat the Work, and I desire your Presence; I will only draw up in short the Sum of our Dispute, that you may at one View see the Strength of my Proofs, and the Weakness of my Adversaries: And then, *Theomachus*, if (in spite of Light) you resolve to remain in Darkness (after I have detected your Errors) I'll pity your Obstinacy. The Company accepted of the Appointment, and so broke up. But *Theomachus*, after mature Deliberation, thought best to wave the Interview; he had been too often foil'd to venture another Push: Besides, he perceiv'd that some of the Gentlemen began to waver: The Reasons of *Eusebius* had done Execution; altho' indeed none had declar'd for Religion, many approv'd it; so that he fear'd another Conference, with a short Exhortation might detach some, and weaken his Party. And if the Success of the Controversy should be put to Vote, he foresaw nothing but Shame for himself, and Victory for his Antagonist: But the Matter being not determin'd (said he to one of his Intimates) like those who have a Suit depending, we may both pretend Right, and so we shall part Stakes. But to withdraw handsomely, he sent *Eusebius* this Letter.

S I R,

I Am sorry Necessity has forc'd me to disappoint you to Morrow; an unforeseen Affair requires my Absence from Town; 'tis both important and pressing, so that I cannot retard my Departure one Day without great Prejudice to my Concerns, and Danger to a Relation. I therefore disengage my Word, and presume you will excuse and pardon my Incivility: When I have rid my Hands of this troublesome Accident,

You may command, SIR,

Yours.

Eusebius read the true Design of *Theomachus* under his false Pretence; and easily perceiv'd he retir'd to avoid both Conviction and Confusion, and indeed it's hard to determine which he dreaded most. For he was jealous of his Honour to Phrenzy, and obstinate in Infidelity to Madness. Notwithstanding *Eusebius* next Morning met the other Gentlemen at the Rendezvous, who were concern'd at the sudden Retreat of their Hero, yet some excus'd, tho' others blam'd him. *Eusebius* addressing himself to the Company, spoke to this Purpose.



The Conclusion of the CONFERENCE,

GENTLEMEN,

WE meet to Day to finish the Dispute; and I thought the Controversy also, but the unexpected Retreat (I would say Flight) of *Theomachus* has baffl'd my Hopes. Had he not suspected the Justice of his Cause, why did he so shamefully desert it? I had no Design on his Honour, but on his Impiety. I should have disclaim'd the Glory of Conquest, had he but acknowledged his Defeat, and abjur'd an Error, that will at last ruin him, and those who inconsiderately abet it. Nay, an humble Confession of the Truth had secur'd his Reputation from Obloquy; the Blemish had fallen on the Cause, not on his Wit; but the Glory of Submission to the Truth had been wholly imputed to his Candour and the Sincerity of his Temper. People had thrown the Reproach of Atheism,

rather

rather on the Misinformation of his Understanding, than on the Perverseness of his Will, so that he could only fear to be esteem'd more unfortunate than criminal: But this ungenteel Flight lays him open to the Severity of Censure, and all understanding Men must necessarily conclude, he wanted Abilities to defend a bad Cause, and Conscience to disown it. But I'll leave him to himself, and where can he be more uneasy, than in his own Company? Though he be without a God, he is not without Fear, and who can sleep secure that harbours such a Fury? Atheists (like the *China Mandarins*) are waited on by Hangmen that punish their own Delinquencies: They can never avoid the Arrest and Execution of their Consciences, tho' they make a Sport of God, and a Diversion of Crimes in publick, they are more serious in private; which is a shrewd Sign their Atheism is imaginary, tho' their Impiety be real. *A God, or no God*, Gentlemen, is an important Question; and those who incline to the Negative, would do well to examine it with Care, with Study, with Coolness and Impartiality, before they come to a final Resolution. When the *Athenians* heard of the Death of their mortal Enemy *Philip the Macedonian*, they were presently for manifesting their Joy by some publick Scene of Jollitry: But a Fellow among the Crowd bid 'em first be sure he was Dead, least one Day they might find him Alive by the Severity of his Revenge. The Atheist of all Men should follow this wholesome, this prudent Advice; and nothing but a strict Demonstration can secure him: For all the plausible Sophisms in the World will never risque him from Danger; nor by consequence his Election from Folly: For so long as he is not demonstratively secure, there is no Deity for any thing he knows there is one; and if there be, he will certainly feel the Exigence of that dreadful Majesty he deny'd, by the Rigour of his Justice: It's therefore our Interest to believe there is a God; and to square our Actions by this Belief; for we can be no Losers by Credulity; but may be undone Eternally by Infidelity: Indeed the Atheist is sensible enough his Case is desperate, if there be a God, and if one may believe him, wishes nothing more, than that it were in his Power to credit his Being: But (says he) this is the proper Work of Demonstration: Evidence alone settles the Judgment, of which I am wholly unfurnish'd: But

But this is a Blindness rather than an Excuse: A petty Artifice to excite Compassion, or to hide Folly and Madness under the Dress of Sincerity. If they expect Mathematical Evidence, they will die Atheists, for such Conviction is impossible, and they that will only submit to Proofs, of which the Matter is incapable, should rather purge than dispute: He is fitter for Physick than Reason; and I would counsel him to shave and air his Brain.

Now let me desire you, Gentlemen, by all that is dear, to take this Matter into Consideration, it deserves Time, Thought, and Reflection. The Question is, Whether there be a God who eternally rewards Vertue, and eternally punishes Vice. What can be more important, than to be well inform'd on which Side of the Contradiction Truth lies? If in the next World there be no high Court of Justice, no Judge, no Account taken either of Good or Evil: Why should Men force Appetite? Storm Inclination, or bridle Desire? Why should they forego the Enjoyments of this Life, and sell a present Satisfaction for a vain Expectation of a future Felicity?

But then if there be a God, Atheists are in ill Circumstances, they must take leave of Life and Pleasure together; and give a sad Farewel to Delights. Their last Breath extinguishes Joy, and kindles a Flame not to consume, but to torment them eternally. Their Musick will end in Tears, their Pleasure in Repentance, and their Repentance in Despair. It's a doleful Catastrophe to be dragg'd from a Palace into a Dungeon; and from the Embraces of a *Dalilah* into those of everlasting Flames. What Man in his Senses would take the most glittering, and most gawdy Happiness in the World, together with such a dreadful Reversion of Torments? Yet, if there be *Scientia in Excelsis*, Knowledge and Justice above, (that is a God) the Infidel Atheist will burn below; and feel the just Revenge of that powerful Majesty he so obstinately denied.

Now, Gentlemen, the Matter standing thus, withdraw from Hurry and Passion, take off all Affection from the present; divorce wholly from this World, till you are sure there is no such Thing as another. Argue with your selves thus: I believe *I am lawfully begotten*; I believe *I am baptiz'd*; and never doubted of either. Yet
I have

I have the bare Testimony of my Mother for the Truth of the first, and perchance the sole Authority of a Parson, or a Midwife, for the Belief of the second. But all Nations tell me there is a God, as well as Ages: Why therefore shall the Word of one Woman, or of one Man, not only sway, but fix and settle my Judgment in those Cases, and not the Joint Testimony of all Men in this? I cannot contemplate the petty Springs of a Watch, or the rude Contrivance of a Cabbin, but presently the Sight leads me naturally to an Artificer. I cannot possibly ascribe the Frame of either to blind Chance, or fatal Necessity; and though I fool my Understanding, and enslave my Reason in a thousand Occasions, in this I cannot. They disobey the most pressing Commands of the Will, they pronounce boldly in spite of Practice and Inclination, that some Hand put the Wheels together, and rais'd the Cottage.

The most ill-shap'd Animal in the World, the most despicable Leaf are more finely contriv'd, than all the Machines that ever Art invented. If therefore the petty Fabrick of a Watch, the unpolish'd Frame of a poor Cottage, convince me they were made by the Hand of an Artificer, must I not confess this Majestick Pile of the World, so vast, so various, so stupendious, was first contriv'd by the Wisdom, and then created by the Power of a most perfect Agent? If a less Motive sways my Judgment, a greater may: And if my Assent be both firm and prudent in one Case, certainly it cannot be unstable and imprudent in the other. A Child may make these Reflections; they are easy, obvious, and convincing. Reason therefore and Interest plead strongly against Atheism; and you cannot abett it without betraying both.

Prostrate (I beseech you) your selves with bended Knees and bleeding Hearts before the Throne of that dread Majesty you have so often provok'd by your Immorality, and abjured by your Infidelity. Obstinacy enflames his Justice; but Tears extinguish it. It's in your Power either to try the Weight of his Anger, or the Sweetness of his Mercy. But if Atheism waits on you to his Tribunal, you must expect nothing but Damnation. God's Greatness will fright you, his Power will disarm you, and his Justice eternally torment you. In spite of Bravado's, Conscience will not only act the Part of

of an Accuser, but of an Executioner also. It will revenge with Interest those Rapes and Violences you have committed against it here, and turn those kind Admonitions you receiv'd with Raillery into so many Instruments of Punishment.

Gentlemen, dare you put these Things to a venture? Will you live in Infidelity as unconcernedly as if all the Terrors of another World were only frightful Dreams of Men awake? Of mere Productions of a feverish and discompos'd Brain? Certainly I have made the Existence of a God too clear to be thought Fancy or Vision. And then I expect Prudence will not permit you to think it a Matter not to be regarded, whether you are eternally happy or miserable.

At least if you are resolv'd to play in this Life, and to weep in the other, decoy not unwearied Gentlemen into so mad a Resolution: Their Pains will not ease yours. If you Plot against their Purse, have no Design upon their Religion. Scoff them not out of their *Creed*, tho' you wheedle them out of their Estates; when you have swept away their present Stock, force them not to make over their Title to Heaven. You can gain nothing by their Loss; for the same time you rally them out of Heaven, you jest your selves into Hell.

Besides, were the Existence of a God, the Truth of Religion doubtful, yet they should be thought on with Seriousness, and spoken of with Reverence; for People put a great Stress on both. They look upon the Belief of a Deity, and the Practice of Religion here as necessary for their Happiness hereafter. They acknowledge it is not only their Duty, but also their Interest to believe a God, and to worship him. Methinks therefore it's a Breach of Civility, and a Failure in Breeding; it's an Affront to Christians, as well as to their Maker, to turn the Object of their Adoration into Sport and Diversion, and their Expectation into Romance. So that you cannot be Profane without being Clowns. Pray therefore (at least for your Reputation's sake) employ your Wits and Tongues on a more credible Subject. Certainly Wit is not grown so Sacrilegious, as not to be pleas'd without polluting holy Things. A Man may be civil without Blasphemy, and lay in a very fair Pretension to Iniquity, without being Guilty of Profaneness.

To draw towards an End ; if you intend to search Truth with Serenity and Candour, take leave of Drollery, preach not down God, Religion, and Sobriety, but treat with Respect those things Mankind reveres, for Men seldom honour what they ridicule ; much less will they prostrate themselves to what they burlesque. Shake off therefore this buffooning Humour, and when the Tongue is brought under Discipline, the Heart will throw off all the Lets of Prejudice and Passion ; and then the Understanding disengag'd from Violence, will easily submit to the Force of those Reasons I have laid before you.

But if you run on in a lewd Vein of Drollery and Impiety, the most persuasive Arguments in the World will never work upon you ; you'll certainly sport your selves into Damnation, and sink down Laughing into Hell. But then those Flames that consume Mirth, will awake Despair. You'll begin to be both serious and wise, when 'twill be too late to be so. Oh, how foolish, how imprudent is it to deny a Deity in this World, and to believe one in the other ! To live Atheists in *London*, and Theists in Hell !



The End of the Second PART.

T H E
Gentleman Instructed,

In the Way of

Conversat ⁿ , Entertainment of Friends, Management of	his Estate, Company-Keep- ing, Travelling, &c.
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With Reflections on some
Modern Practitioners of Law.

A S A L S O,

An E s s a y upon the Im-
mortality of the S o u l.

P A R T I I I .

L O N D O N :

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General Introduction

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PART III.

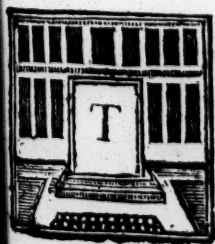
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THE
PUBLISHER
TO THE
YOUNG NOBILITY and GENTLEMEN
OF
ENGLAND.

GENTLEMEN,



THE former Two Parts of the Gentleman Instructed, have been so kindly Received by the Nobility, that I presume to recommend the Third also, to the Favour of their Protection. Books make their Fortune, as well as younger Brothers, by the Credit of great Patrons ; they are unable to break through the Opposition of Criticism, without the support of Authority ; and so are supposed guilty, because no Body will stand up in their Defence ; for at present Prejudice and Censure run high, and (what is worse) out of their proper Channel. Good Books generally meet with Reproach, and bad as often with Approbation. We square our Judgments by our Conduct, so that it's odds those Men who declare for Vice, will never relish a Lecture of Morality. No, no ; when a Book condemns our Behaviour, we take the freedom, by way of Re-
H h *prizals,*

prizals, to condemn it; as if it were lawful with Mr. Hobbs, to controul Reason, when Reason takes the Liberty to controul us.

I therefore expect that Libertines and Debauchees will take Check at the Freedom of these Papers, as well as at the Subject; and that possibly they may discharge a Volly of Reproaches upon the Author; for in a hurry Passion mistakes a Friend for a Foe, and falls as foul on those who come to our Rescue, as on those who intend our Ruin; but the best on't is, the Force of their Weapons answers not the strength of their Malice; for, alas, a Jest makes a weak Thrust, and a Sarcaſm a weaker; and sober Men seldom condemn a Book, because Libertines burlesque it; for the Opinion of such Judges is always suspected of Partiality, and so neither be a Credit to a Cause, nor a great Misfortune.

Who Commissions this, Eusebius, (said a Spark) to tutor all Mankind? To lash our Failures? To expose our Persons to Reproach and Infamy? Must he pedant it over his Betters, and revile Quality at Descretion? Has he not stript us of our Robes, and shown us in dishabile to the Rabble? First to render us cheap and despicable, and then to entertain the Publick at our Expences? Though we are Lewd, why must we appear Little? Though we forfeit our Innocence, we have right to Respect; the Gentleman wants Breeding, and his Person should be brought to Pennance, as well as his Pen.

Why, Good Sir, all this Heat (said I) I counsel you to stifle your Resentment, unless you can disarm this pretended Adversary, confute his Evidence, or deny the Charge; for after all, tho' People abandon Vertue, few have the Impudence to burlesque it; Its Interest is not quite sunk. Conscience and Shame have not lost all footing; and though it be not uncreditible to commit an ill Action, it's infamous, at least, to defend it. If the Gentleman's Charity challenges not Thanks, I am sure it deserves not Reviling; it should strike out some sparks of Repentance, and not kindle Flames of Anger. He tells you, you pass on to Damnation, and desires you to stop. Is it such an Incivility to interpose? Did we see a blind Man upon the brink of a Precipice, should we not admonish him of the Danger, and speed to his Assistance.

Young Gentlemen, hoodwinkt by Passion, and fascinated by the bewitching Blandishments of sensual Pleasures, take not only the most easy, but the shortest Road to endless Torments; he cries out stop, and you question his Commission, and formalize

malize upon the legality of his Proceeding. Your Danger (dear Sir) on the one side, and Charity on the other, are his Warrant. Nay, and the Principles of that Religion you prostitute to Lewdness, are his Justification and Protection.

Indeed he has drawn some disproportioned Characters, but the fault lies not in the Painter, but in the Original; the Gentleman had no Intention to provoke any Man's Resentment, or to expose his Person; he hath blended a thousand different Faces together, so that this Confusion of Features and Complexions will conceal the Originals. In short, Sir, I counsel you rather to mend than to storm: If you will not apply the Remedy, thank at least the Gentleman that presents it.

But, however, the Spark would come to no Terms of Accommodation with Eusebius, he would post him up for a Pedant, and pronounce him a presuming Coxcomb in all places, and all Company. Thus this poor Man over-looks nothing in Ill-nature or worse Manners, and strain'd his Resentments to all the Heights of Folly and Madness; but he fancied in Eusebius's Character he saw his own; and so to clear his Complexion, and brightens his Features, he would break the Glass; as if the Deformity lay in the Medium, and not in his Face.

Thus some People attack Godliness under every Form; they give Vertue no Quarter, and Vice no Disturbance; they have banisht Goodness from Practice, and will not suffer it to appear even upon Paper: No, no, Conscience must have no Retreat, and God no Worship. Certainly in these Men's Opinions, Hell is a place of Diversion, and Heaven of Torments.

But, Gentlemen, I hope the sober Part of you will receive this Present with more Civility, and if you cannot resolve to imitate the Pattern, I am confident you will at least commend it. I have mingled his Actions with his Precepts; and so have at the same time thrown before you a Scheme of his Practice, and an Essay of his Documents; you will at one View see what he did, and read what he taught; and then we must conclude, Gentlemen are far gone in Wickedness, if both Reason and Example are unable to recover them.

The Way to Vertue by Precept (says Seneca) is long, by Example short; this affects more strongly than Speculation; it invivens our Spirits, and prepares them for Action; the Prospect of hazardous Enterprizes oftentimes dumps Courage, and dispirits Bravery it self; but when we see Men undertake

undertake it with *Valour*, and come off with *Success*, we envy the Hero, and applaud the *Action* : We then conclude, that things are feasible that seem impossible, and that oftentimes the very Difficulty lies more in the *Fancy*, than in the *Attempt*.

Flesh and Blood paint *Vertue* in a frightful Dress, and the Duties of a Christian in the Garb of a *Fury* ; they seem Monsters to the Nobility, more fit to be gazed on than practised, and rather scare than invite. Eusebius has discovered the *Imposture*, and unmask'd the *Artifice* ; he has convinc'd the World by *Practice*, that *Vertue* has nothing hideous but a false *Vizor*, and that the Duties of a Christian are no *Nuisance* ; that our Maker never intended to bind us up to disadvantage, nor to turn our Duty into our Misfortune. The Office of a Christian in this great Man, interfered not with that of a Gentleman ; his Behaviour was handsome, and his Carriage Religious ; he kept up a continual Correspondence with God, without breaking off all Commerce with Men. In a Word, he lived both a Gentleman and a Saint ; loved by most, and admired by all.



T H E



T H E

Gentleman Instructed, &c.

PART III.

DIALOGUE I.

Young Gentlemen are dissuaded from a Town-Life.



HO' the Dispute was over, the Controversy went on. *Theomachus* was indeed too weak to keep his Ground, but too stubborn to ask Quarter. He durst not Boast of Victory, and would not acknowledge his Defeat; so that in Conclusion he was willing to draw Stakes, and confess'd that both maintain'd their Post with equal Resolution. In fine, (said he, with a Smile,) *Eusebius* and I fought here, as our *Alkies* and *French* at *Luzara*: Both are Conquerors, and both overcome. I give him leave to clap his Wings, if he'll permit me to crow.

Neander was present at the Dispute, and by good Fortune in the Company, when *Theomachus* bolted out this *Rhodomontade*. His Confidence was extraordinary, and his Air unusually pretending. Passion flush'd in *Neander's* Face, and almost broke out at his Tongue. He had no Mind to renew the Combat; for he knew *Atheists* ever return Smiles for Reason, and keep their Ground rather by dint of Forehead than Argument. However, not to suffer him to be pleasant without check; I perceive (said he)

he) you have run in a Circle, taken many Steps, but rid no Ground ; you are just where you were in setting out ; because, *for ought you know there may be a God*, and then you are a Madman by Demonstration.

I have told you, reply'd *Theomachus*, God is an airy Being, the Child of Fancy, and Spawn of Imagination, a Bugbear to awe Fools, and fright Children ; and if *Ensebius* has hector'd much on this Subject, he has proved little. For, Sir, I distinguish between Flourish and Argument ; between starcht Cant, and solid Reason.

It may be so (answer'd *Neander* ;) but if his Reason for a God come not up to Evidence, yours for no God (by your own Confession) falls short of Demonstration. For in a Word, Sir, *It's a drawn Battle*. It's therefore no less probable there is a God, than that there is none ; and by consequence you must commence *Fool*, to remain an *Atheist*.

Theomachus was pinch'd for an Answer, and therefore he retreated to the last Retrenchment of baffled *Libertines*, Raillery, and Satyr. For you must know these Gentlemen bite, when they cannot speak to the purpose ; and laugh down those Arguments they cannot reason out of Countenance.

Your Logick, young Man, (said he,) is as callow as your Chin, and your Understanding as soft as your Beard. Leave Philosophy to thum the *Grammar*, rub over *Propria quæ Maribus*, before you venture on Divinity ; your Intellect is pen-feathered, too weak wing'd to soar so high : A Dog or a Racer are more proper Entertainment for your Age, than God. And I presume you are more able to judge of Wine, than of Theological Niceties.

Nay, (said *Neander*,) if Age be the Standard of Sense, and Arguments are measured not by Mood and Figure, but Beards, then certainly all the Advantage lies on your Side ; but under Favour, (*Sir*,) Beards and Reason go not always together. Age is not the Measure of Truth and Falsehood. Threescore may be in the wrong, and Twentry in the right : Fling therefore Years out of the Question, and come up close to the Point. But *Theomachus* thought fit to drop the Controversy, and withdrew, while the way lay open for a Retreat. The Difficulty pinch'd, and he had no colourable Answer in reserve. And therefore being in no Condition to withstand his Adversary, he

took

took the Liberty to contemn him. And indeed, this petty Policy is a wonderful Relief to a sinking Courage. It lays a Varnish of Generosity on Cowardice, and gives Fear the Colour of good Nature.

Theomachus was no more for drawn Battles, he saw that by drawing Stakes, he should lose the Sett. And therefore (to cry up his Party, and his expiring Credit) he proclaim'd himself Conqueror, and his Adversary defeated. *Eusebius* (said he) is slipt into the Country to air his Brains, and to throw off the Chagrine that always discomposes routed Generals. He dares not keep the Field, but cantons his scatter'd Forces in Villages.

Eusebius indeed had bid adieu to the Town, with a Resolution never to return. He was Sick of Company, and more of those Follies he could neither endure, nor correct. He could not without Indignation behold Christians lead the Lives of Pagans, and profane the best Religion with the foulest Crimes. *What Pleasure* (said he) *can a Christian take in a place where Vice rides in Triumph, and Vertue groans in a Dungeon; where Goodness lies under Contempt, and Irregularity receives Applause; where the best Actions are lampoon'd, and the worst deified?*

Neander rid over to his House, five Miles only distant from the Town. He informed him of *Theomachus's* Comportment since his Retreat, with what an Air of Confidence he proclaim'd his Victory: That the Cabal began to hold up their Heads and crow: That *Atheism* had almost recovered of its Wound, and began to walk Abroad. That his Presence might stop the Evil his Absence would give Opportunity to spread. That *Theomachus* would withdraw at his Arrival, and carry his Poison and Impudence into the Country.

Alas! (reply'd *Eusebius*,) dear *Neander*, you are unacquainted with the Temper of *Atheists*. It's easy to confound 'em, but almost impossible to convert 'em, their Disease lies in the Heart, not in the Head. Their Misfortune takes its Rise from Obstinacy, not Ignorance. And how can you reason a Man out of Infidelity, who resolves to remain in it against Reason? Libertinism, *Neander*, is a bewitching Thing, when it gets the Ascendant; 'twill improve Ignorance for an excuse of Freedom; cast Conscience into a Lethargy, and bribe the Understanding against our own Interest. In a Word,

it's a Sin seldom forgiven in this World, and never in the other.

Atheism (replied *Neander*) is not the only Vice of the Town, other Sins seem free of the City; and Men endeavour to dilate the Malignity, and to keep the Disorder in countenance. If People have the Face to preach up Ungodliness in Discourse, and Practice plant *both* against it; good Counsel, back'd by Example, may do as much Execution upon Vice, as bad upon Vertue. In the next World, indeed, Men's Wills are either fixt in Good or Evil, but in this they may pass from one Extream to the other. Besides, all are not so charm'd with Sin, as to persuade themselves it deserves no Punishment, nor so out of Conceit of Vertue, as to discard it of all Reward: Their Misfortune springs rather from Weakness than Malice; from youthful Heat, than from Infidelity. Time will cool their Blood, and Instruction may inform their Understanding, and when this is disabus'd, the Will shakes off the Enchantment.

What can Advice (said *Ensebins*) signify to those, who are always more prepared to curse, or ridicule the Adviser, than to practice the Counsel? To those who are unman'd by Effeminacies, and even nailed to ill Habits? They are without Conscience, without Principles, how will you come at them? You may almost as soon preach down a Hurricane, or declaim a Tempest into a Calm, as counsel a bad Man into a good one. Whilst we frame ill Notions of the Future State, our Lives will hardly be regular. What hope of Recovery when the Patient dotes on the Disease, when he flies in the Face of the Doctor and suspects every Cordial to be a Dose of Arsenick or Ratsbane? In a Word, the Malignity of the Fever works up to Madness; and, like some Bedlams, they suppose themselves the Wisdom of the Nation.

I suppose, indeed, that all who throw up their Innocence, and pawn Heaven for Pleasure, have not quite taken leave of Religion, or dismiss'd Principles; but *they* have *Moses and the Prophets*, Pastors and Teachers: I am not Curate-General, nor intend to interfere with another's Function: Those who tend the Sick, are often struck with the Infection; and the Doctor that cures his Patient, sometimes dies of his Distemper.

What

What ! (said *Neander*, with a Smile) you are on guard against the Infection of the Town : Surely you have outliv'd Temptation. Age has so congeal'd your Blood, that nothing but a *Christmas* Block is able to thaw it. Neither the World nor Devil can work up thy Humours to Irregularity. Thy Passions (like Serpents in a Frost) drop their Venom ; they move without Vigour, and almost without Life : They are so far from capering, that like Criminals in Trammels, they can scarce stand. To have one Foot in the Grave, and the other in the Bordel is unusual. For Men, like *Aetna*, burn within, when they are Snow without. A white Head, and a glowing Heart, seldom meet.

No Man (reply'd *Eusebius*) is secure, and therefore all should stand upon the *Qui va la*. Age, indeed, is less expos'd than Youth, but it's not above Danger ; and I have known some carry their Disorders on to Fourscore. They spurred on Nature jaded by Age, and rid down by a long Course of Excesses, till it sunk under the Burthen, and went off the Stage both with Shame and Sin, scorn'd by Men, and tormented by the Omnipotent.

It's therefore our Duty to withdraw from ill Example, and not to come within Sight of Occasions. Like the *Basilisk*, they kill with their very Sight, and the Poison is too quick for a Remedy. Fly therefore, dear *Neander*, the Town ; Temptation seconded by Youth, and sharpened by Idleness, will be too hard for Precept. *Lot* found Safety in the Country, and his Wife Death for looking back upon the unfortunate City. God has left this sad Example for a Caveat to Posterity, to have any Commerce with Sinners, least by Conversation we espouse their Crimes, and partake of their Punishment.

And indeed when young People fix in Town, they glean up its Vices, and continue the Practice, till their Estates founder, and their Bodies sink under the Weight of their Disorders. Unthinking Creatures ! They sport in the Camp of their Enemies ; Danger surrounds them, and what is worse, either unseen or unregarded. Temptation assaults them not with the Violence of an Enemy, but the Caresses of a Friend. This throws them off their Guard, disarms Cautions, and gives them up to the Government of Carelessness, so that they Surrender without Resistance, and Sigh in Fetters before they Dream of an Enemy

Enemy. Nay, one would think they lost their Wits with their Liberty, and commenc'd Fools the same Moment they become Slaves. For they fancy themselves the only free Subjects in the Nation, because they are not coop'd up between four Walls. And dote on their Captivity, because they hector in Taverns, and rattle in gilt Coaches. But, alas ! these pleasing Fancies, are the Effect of a dozing Opiate of the Devil's Malice, not of his Kindness : He regales his Friends, as the *Indians* do their Slaves, merely to prepare them for Slaughter.

Now these Men turned into Sense, are unqualified for good Counsel ; you may as soon reason a Swine out of the Mire, as these into Sobriety and Temperance. They'll carry on their Brutalities in spite of all their Sermons they hear, and make over the Lord's-Day to the Devil.

We have indeed Committees for the Improvement of Piety, as well as for that of Trade. And so have made Provisions for the Interest of God, no less than for that of the Nation. But, alas ! If our Censors deserve Censure, Reformation will be at a stand ; their Example will do more Execution on Vice than their Office : And their Practice would carry on more heartily the Interest of Vertue, than their Commission. A Man that flings his Estate into a Misses Lap, will not be fined out of her Company with Forty Shillings ; and he who leaps over the Laws of God, will scarce boggle at *Acts of Parliament*.

In fine, *Neander*, our Town-Sparks are a monstrous Generation, a kind of Centaur, half Man, and half Beast. They have the Shape of the first, and all the Brutality of the second ; they follow the Stream of Inclination like Beasts ; they chop at any thing that gratifies Sense. But then they switch on Nature, and here they leave the Beast to play the Fiend. Immortal Spirits seem tied to all the infamous Impressions of Flesh and Blood, and bind themselves Slaves to the Devil in this Life, for Pleasure in Hand, and Eternal Torments in Reversion.

Had you a Vote in the House, or a Place at the Board, (said *Neander*) you would be for a Proclamation to clear the Town of all the young Gallants above Fifteen, and under Thirty.

When

When a Gentleman's Business (reply'd *Eusebius*) lies in Town, I would not have him take Coach for the Country. For at such a Distance things would not go on kindly. The Man and his Business, like Man and Wife, must live together: Separate Dwellings, require a separate Maintenance. Now when we double Expences, Accounts seldom run even: Those who have Offices at *White-Hall*, may take up Lodgings in *Spring-Garden* or *Pallmall*; who intend to build a Fortune upon the Law, may take up in the *Inns of Court*: And if they are for Trade, they may pack off to *Wapping* or *Cheapside*.

But, I confess, I would not have those come nearer than *Hampstead* or *Hunslow-Heath*, who have no other Business than Diversion; for they will certainly idle away their Time, Mortgage their Souls to the Devil, and their Estates to Misses, Vintners, and Lawyers.

Idleness, dear *Neander*, is a dangerous Disease under all the Elevations; but it's Mortal at *London*. It's not only the Mother, but the Mistress of Vice. *Multam enim malitiam docuit otiositas*, *Ecclus.* Chap. 43. A Man that has nothing to do, has leisure to do any thing: He lies open to all Temptations, and what is worse, is unprepared for a Defence; like a dismantled Town, he falls into the Hands of the first Invader.

Indeed at his first arrival Business flows in upon him: One would think he sat at the Helm, and steered the weighty Concerns of the *English* Monarchy. The first Secretary of State is in a less hurry on Post-Days, and sends about fewer Dispatches. For you must know he Subpcena's *Sempstresses*, *Tailors*, *Barbers*, and *Coach-makers*, to appear at his Levee, one would fancy this Heterogeneous Junctio took into consideration *ardua Regni Negotia*, they play at *pro* and *con* with such Heat and Commotion. Now all this Noise is nothing but a learned Debate upon the Modes of the Town, and an advantageous Mixture of Colours. He is for Delicacy and Exactness of Fancy, for nothing tawdry and mechanick, flaunting or ill matcht. And Doctors are divided upon the Point: But all agree to bubble the Squire. For it's a kind of *Postulatum* among the Beaus, that nothing is modish that is not dear; nay, the Goodness even of Snuff rises with the Price, and *Tobacco* at five Guineas the Pound, is twenty Times better than the same at a Crown.

I knew

I knew a Spark that sit a whole Morning in a close Committee with a *Barber*: Now this mighty Consultation was about a *Perriwig*. He shew'd him *Twenty*, but one was too long, another too short; this too full, that too thin: At last, *Sirrah* (says the Youngster) *make me a smart Wig, a smart One, ye Dog*. The Fellow blest himself; he had heard of a smart *Nag*, a smart *Man*, &c. but a smart *Wig* was *Chinese* to the Tradesman. However, nothing could please his *Worship*, but *smart Shoes*, *smart Hats*, and *smart Cravats*: Within two Days he had a *smart Wig*, with a smart Price in the Box. The Truth is, he had been bred up with the Groom, and transplanted the Stable dialect into the Dressing-room.

Was he a Gentleman, said *Neander*? A Gentleman, answer'd *Eusebius*; yes, of a Family more ancient than the *Norman* or *Saxon* Conquest: He was of the *La Fools* of the *North*, allied to the eldest Branch of the *La Fools* of *Essex*.

Now let us suppose his Equipage compleat, and his grand Concern over; his next Business is to confute *Job's* Aphorism, *Man is born to Labour*. No, he is a thing made merely for Sport and Pleasure; he fancies God has assign'd him no other Employment than to live at Random, without Law, without Restraint. And altho' God has given every Part of the Creation a convenient Post, he seems a Mute placed in view merely for Light and Parade. You must not therefore wonder I attempt not to define his Calling, seeing he will not pretend to any.

One weighty Affair calls upon him every Morning, viz. *How he shall Saunter away the Day*. This is a *moot Point*, and requires Plodding and Application, and indeed he dwells upon the Subject till a considerable Part of the Day is past, before he can take a final Resolution how to pass it. Nay, with less Pains he might have employ'd the whole Day well, than in the very Deliberation of spending it ill.

For pray imagine not the Practice of any Christian Virtue falls under Debate, where he shall hear Prayers, or hear a Sermon. Alas! Those Duties lie below the Sphere of a Gentleman, who pretends to the Garb and Freedom of the Town; he might have discharg'd them in his Country Parish, without the Expence of a flaunting Equipage, or the Fatigue of a tedious Journey. And you may take this for a Principle, that Devotion never coached
a young

a young Man to Town, nor gave him a Surfeit of the Country. Liberty, Pleasure, and downright Debauchery allure him thither ; these command him, as God did *Abraham*, to forsake House and Relation to turn Tenant, though he was Lord and Proprietor in the Country.

The Morning is divided between the Pillow and the Toylet, and this is the most important as well as the most innocent Employment of the Day. The Folly is much greater than the Sin : For what can be more foolish than for a Man to espouse the Weakness of a Woman ? To take Pains to be laught at ? To drain his Pocket to make himself cheap and ridiculous ? However, you may with more ease harangue a Peacock out of his Brains, than a Town-Spark out of his gaudry : He will appear in Print, and convince the World that Finery and Folly are near allied.

And now his Friends crowd in to give him the *bon jour* ; these are a kind of *partie bleue*, that *marode* upon new Comers, with Commission from Indigence and Necessity. They have rioted away their Conscience, met and dined away their Estates, and now graze upon the Common. Their Honesty runs lower than their Pockets, and their Confidence over-shoots Impudence. Their Crimes are as publick as their Debts, and their Religion keeps pace with their Morals ; they scorn to fling even a Varnish over the foulest Disorders, and will not go to the Expence of civil Hypocrisy. In fine, they are a Blemish to their Family, a Nuisance to the Town, and a Scandal to Conversation.

These Sparks, like the Steward in the Gospel, *cannot Dig, and will not Beg* ; and altho' *Adam* was condemned to live by the Sweat of his Brows, they resolve to make a Figure by that of their Conscience. At the first Sight of a raw Gentleman, they fly at him like a Vulture at the Quarry, and for the same End also, to pray first upon his Vertue, then upon his Money ; how many Nets do they lay to ensnare the Squire, and Knave themselves ? They ply him with Visits, study his Temper, and strike in with his Inclination. They Swear his Wit is without Parallel ; his Behaviour above Imitation ; that *a je ne say quoy* runs through every Motion, which charms and astonishes. In fine, that he is the very top of his Species. The poor Gentleman, unpractised in the Dialect of the

Town, takes these Compliments for *content*; he supposes himself in *Yorkshire*, where the Tongue and the Heart go together, where Thought and Words look the same Way. Now this City-Incense sends out a most grateful Flavour, but it is too strong for a Country Brain. It turns his Head, and smoaks him out of Sense and Reason; he fancies himself a Cubit higher; he walks in the Clouds; and values himself not by the Pound, but (like Diamonds) by the *Caract*.

In a Word, he flings himself into their Arms, and gives himself up to their Direction. And then you may be sure he meets with the Fate of the Sheep in the Fable, who dismiss the Dogs to graze under the Protection of the Wolves; for a Libertine is a Devil once removed, or at least his Deputy; nay, he is ten Times more mischievous by Proxy, than in Person. People of themselves are prone enough to Laziness, Lewdness, and Extravagance, but these add Byass to Nature; they provoke Passion by Precept, and whet Appetite by the Charms of Glory and Reputation; they school him out of all the Revelations in the Gospel, and debauch him in Principle and Practice; for *Scepticks* have faint Notions of God, and consequently none of Conscience; they have no Relish of Vertue, and lie under no moral Restraints from Hope or Fear: So that they have nothing to do, but to indulge their Inclinations, to gratify Sense, to fill their Pockets with one Hand, and to empty them with the other. Now to take in a Gentleman's Money, you must first beat down all Principles of Morality, you must draw a Scheme of Gentility by the Rules of *Epicure*; and if you can persuade him he is only free of the Town, when he has discharged Conscience, and sent back Religion into the Country; you may *rook* him out of his Estate, with the same Facility you have *raked* him into Debauchery.

For this Reason they take Care to inform him of all the Embellishments of a Town-Gentleman, without any mention of the Duties of a Christian. They tell him, that Wit is the best Quarter in a Gentleman's Escutcheon, and that he must bid fair for a Place among the *Vertuoso's*, but that Profaneness is the shortest cut to this Preferment, and the best Standard of Sense and Breeding, (*id est*) his Wit must be as wretched as his Manners. When

he is pinch'd for a Reason, he must bolt out a Jest; *that* fits well enough on a Pedant, *this* on a Gentleman, provided it be tipt with Impudence, and pointed with Boldness; that he must beware of that vulgar Error *Religion*, because it cramps Freedom, palls the Spirits, and coops up Liberty in a strait Compass; that he must be sure to be out of the Reach of Scruples, and above the Follies of Remorse. Now such Principles, driven on by Example, easily lead him into Excesses; and these help on the belief of the Doctrine; so that by a kind of mutual Priority, the one serves for a Vehicle to the other.

Indeed, at the beginning, Debauchery lies hard upon the Stomach: he pukes, and is crop-sick; but Practice and Wine carry off the Distemper, and then the Soul becomes Case-hardened; he is so far from blushing at his Disorders, that he thinks Ambition a Reputation for Debauchery; he charges himself with false Impieties, and usurps Wickednesses he is only guilty of by his Boasting.

And now being fleht in Sin, he bounds from one disorder to another, and turns not only a Day, but the whole Year into a mad Sort of *Bacchanalia*. Other Trades have some Weeks of a Vacation, but his go on the very *Sundays*; and generally his Profaneness rises with the Holiness of the Day. His first Jaunt is to a Treating-House; here he Trespasses upon all the Rules of Temperance and Sobriety; he over-charges his Stomach with Ragousts, and his Head with Wine: Appetite runs away with Reason, Sensuality with Shame, and he fancies he only drinks like a Man, when he sinks into the Beast. Men should eat and drink to live, but he inverts the Primitive Institution, and seems only to live for the Satisfaction of his Palate: He would never die, yet plunges into Excesses, as if Life were a burthen; for he is never well till he falls Sick of a Surfeit, and almost out of his Wits, till he has drowned them in Claret.

From the Table he removes to Play, and leaves the Glass to handle the Dice; when a Gentleman has drunk away his Reason, he generally flings his Money after it, for he cannot justify himself to the Fashion, nor keep up to the Character, unless his Purse be as light as his Head; and he is haunted by a Brigade of Sharpers who ply at his Pocket, and give no more Quarter to his Guinea's, than

than to their own Conscience. They cruise upon Gentlemen, like Parties in *Flanders*, upon Passengers. Poverty and Luxury seal their Commission ; and what they seize by one Crime, they throw away by another. One would take them for *Crassus's* by their Expences, and for Cut-purses by their Filching.

At first they suffer him to win, to invite him to lose, and by good Luck decoy him into bad ; but then the Wind chops into another Corner ; Fortune submits to Cogging, and the Deceit over-reaches Play. A thousand Curses fly after good Luck, but are unable to recal it, so that at once he is Bankrupted of Patience, Money, and Grace ; however, he will not sit down with his Loss, he supposes Fortune continues never long in the same Humour ; that if she frowns to Day, she must smile to Morrow : Away then he goes to a second Rendezvous, but, alas, the desire of retrieving his Losses, only serves to enhance them : He seldom discovers the Deceit, till nothing is left to be cheated of ; nor even suspects over-reaching, till Caution comes too late.

By this time he has diced himself Sober, and the fumes of Chagrin have mastered those of Wine. Nothing but a Comedy can dispel the glooms that rise from an empty Pocket. Away then they drive to the Theatre ; and here Vice attacks him by the Eyes and the Ears too ; he sees almost the very secret Mysteries of the Stews, and hears all the Blasphemies of the damned ; here Lewdness is spoken, not in *double Entendres*, but plain *English* ; there are Paraphrase and Comment upon the Text, and Folly is shown without Caution or Reserve.

Comedy, they say, was design'd by Pagan *Athens* to instruct Youth, and to teach the Baseness of Vice by its Punishment : But in Christian *London*, it tends directly to debauch People all manner of Ways : For this Reason good Men are lasht, and ill rewarded : Vertue appears in Sackcloth, and Vice in Embroidery ; Rakes go off with Success, and sober Men with Disappointment : the Devil and the Poet chop upon the same Favourite, and his Fortune always rises with his Lewdness. Nay, those of the best Quality in the Play, are always the worst Christians ; they glitter in Equipage, and are dignified with Escutcheon, and often with Patent to enable Vice : To persuade People that the Blemishes of Hu-

mane Nature make up its Perfection, and that Gentlemen and Reprobates are made of the same Metal. Now who can be good under such strong Provocations to Evil? Who will pretend to Regularity, when they must blush for their Resolution? And cannot avoid Reproach, unless they deserve it. Believe me, *Neander*, when a Gentleman is pinch'd with this dangerous Dilemma, *I must either forfeit my Character, or my Innocence*; it's odds he will rather drop *this*, than put *that* to a venture, for it goes hard when one must turn Lewd as it were in his own Defence; and can expect no quarter, unless he hangs out the Colours of Libertinism and Irreligion, and boasts of those Crimes he is only guilty of in Appearance.

Now though such hideous Flights of Profaneness, such Heights of Obscenity, and Strains of Irreligion should be all Pennance and Mortification to Christians, yet they are not only permitted, but applauded by the Nobility of both Sexes, and the Standard of their Approbation is often the Undecency of the Poem: Nothing is supposed soft, unless it be rotten, and all those Pieces are damned by the Spectators, that damn not the Audience. When the most flaming Impieties are thus received with Transport on the Stage, are they not stamp'd, as it were, with publick Authority? And when the worst Actions are most esteemed, who will boggle at the Practice that brings both Credit and Pleasure? It's certain the Charms of the Theatre, are no less transforming than those of *Cerces*, it enchants Men out of their Species, they leave their Reason behind them, and carry Brutality to their Lodgings; it destroys all Principles of Religion and Morality; it countenances Atheism, and places the Glory of Gentlemen, in the Infamy of human Nature; it sullies the Imagination, boils up the Humours, and fires the Passions; and when it has thus started the Game, Flesh and Blood pampered by high Feeding, and supplied with Money, will follow the Chace; and you may take it for granted, that *London* is better (I mean worse) stockt with *Thais's* than *Lucretia's*. Youth and Coin make prostitute Women, as well as debauch'd Men, and the Play-house serves not only for a School to Prostitution, but for a Nursery also to the Stews; nay, and sometimes to *Bedlam*.

Now when a young Gentleman is drencht in Brutality; when criminal Amours take the ascendant, he is undone to all Intent and Purpose; for when Love flies high, Reason runs low; and whosoever has made over his Heart to a *Miss*, seldom keeps his Wits; he lies open to all the Assaults of Artifice and Avarice, and his Soul becomes as Bestial as his Pleasures, he can think of nothing that is generous or manly. So that in Conclusion he has no more of the Man, than of the Christian.

To comprehend all in a little; a Town-Spark is a kind of *Corinthian Brass*; this is a Mixture of all Metals, and he a Compound of all Disorders; he is a little Anti-Christ, *Homo peccati*, *A Man of Sin*; and this, like the Devil in the Gospel, is call'd *Legion*; he plies between the Tavern and the Play-house, and then turns off to the *Groom-Porters* or the *Stews*; in one place he drops his Wits, in the other his Money, and every where his Innocence. So that the Devil lodges mostly in his Pocket, and always in his Soul. He has the Shape of a Man, and all the Inclinations of Beasts; his Study is to flush the most agreeable Objects of Sense, and his whole Satisfaction to enjoy 'em; he stands not upon the Niceties of Decency, nor Formalizes upon the Notions of Good and Evil. Pleasure is the Rule, as well as the End of his Actions; and altho' he be unable to satisfy one Passion, he endeavours to glut them all. When he can devise no new Crime, he entertains his Thoughts on the Ideas of past Diversions, and so debauches his very Memory, as well as his Will, and commits imaginary Sins, which, unrepented, will be revenged with real Torments.

I confess (said *Neander*) if the Original holds up to this Copy, a Town-Spark has more of the Monster, than of the Man; and I would no more come within the Air of the City, than of a Pest-house. But certainly you over-flourish upon an ill Subject, and paint 'em in more disadvantageous Colours than Nature made 'em, such Creatures are found in Fancy only, not in Life; and I believe Satyr has drawn some black Strokes upon Practice. Without doubt young Gentlemen are not all Saints; nor are they all Fiends; some may live better, and others worse.

Indeed, *Neander*, (replied *Eusebius*) I have drawn the young Men of the Town in worse Colours than Nature

ture made 'em, but not so bad as they have made themselves. Cast a transient Glance on those of your Acquaintance, and you will confess our Age swarms with *Borborigs*, as well as the preceding, who rowl in Mire (like swine) of the most hideous Sensualities; having shaken off the Yoke of Obedience to Parents, they break through the Commandments of God. Scorn all Guides but Temerity; all Law, but the Liberty to follow every Impulse of Passion; all Labour, but that of the Devil, to plunge themselves into Eternal Flames, and others with 'em, that they may find Companions in Punishment, as well as in Pleasure.

But pray, what is this to the Town, (answer'd *Neander*?) In spite of Provocation to Evil, Men may live with Regularity in the very Liberties of the City; if therefore they deviate from their Duty, leave the Fault to their own Door, and charge not the Town with their Extravagancies. I grant, Temptations are frequent, and often violent; but then these polish Vertue, as Fire purifies Gold. Vertue, till it be brought to the Touch-stone, has often more Lustre than Solidity, and all its value hangs on the Surface. But when it stands its Ground in sight of Provocation, and bears up against the Torrent of Flesh and Blood, it then appears like the Sun in its Meridian, in Pomp and Glory.

Without doubt (said *Ensebius*) London Air has no Influence on Man's Free-will; it lays under no Restraint, no fatal Necessity. Man is Master of his Choice, in one place as well as in another; but what avails a Power to live well, with a Will to live ill? A Man must lie under the irrevokable Sentence of Damnation to Sin merely for his sake. Such a Strain of Malice is above the Reach of the most daring Debauchee: Interest, Ambition, and Criminal Pleasures, are the great Incentives to Vice, these rouse Appetite, enliven the Passions, and then subdue the Will. Now where do these Temptations take up their Lodgings, but in the Town? Here they are set off with all the Charms of State and Grandeur; and then besides they persecute Youth, not with Frowns, but Smiles, and kill with Kindness.

But you tell me, Temptation polishes Vertue, and distinguishes Sterling from Artifice and Appearance. Great Good! why don't you take a turn in a Pest-house, to

try the Strength of your Constitution, or in an Hospital to air your Lungs? By all means; young Men should step into a Brothel' to refine their Chastity, and into a Tavern to practice Temperance and Sobriety. Dear Sir, the way to secure Vertue, is not to expose it; come not within Sight of Temptation: It's a short Passage from being provoked to Evil, and doing it: Fear is a better Guardian of Piety than Confidence, and more Men have forfeited it by Temerity than Caution.

But certainly (said *Neander*) *London* is not composed of *Taverns*, *Brothels*, and *Theatres*. Gentlemen may visit more regular Places, and sling away their Time on Diversions less dangerous and more innocent.

Yes (reply'd *Eusebius*) they may visit a hundred and thirty Churches, and I assure you this Jaunt would take much Time off their Hands; but alas! their Business lies not within Sight of a Chapel; they may also cry about the Streets *Save-alls* and *Charcoal*, or tug at an Oar between *Temple-Bar* and *White-Hall*: Or, in fine, they may steer by the Compass of Sir S— D—, who drove every Day in a stately Equipage to all the Toy-shops between *Piccadilly* and the *Royal-Exchange*; he viewed every thing, but bought nothing. The Gentleman would not do worse, but could not frame any Pastime better without doubt he play'd the Fool, but not the Rake; he toyed away his Time, yet kept his Money with his Innocence; his Soul was little, though his Birth was great, and his Inclinations childish at Threescore. However, it's better to trifle, than to debauch away Time and to be a *Coxcomb*, than a *Reprobate*. But such an Humorist is a *Phoenix*, the Birth and Wonder of an Age; a Pair seldom meets in a Kingdom, and never in one City.

You take Things by the wrong Handle (said *Neander*) and represent them at a Disadvantage: If the Sun, influenced by inferior Bodies, has some Spots, what wonder a Town-Life be waited on by some Inconveniences. I grant many Diversions are not Innocent, yet all are not Criminal. For Example: What harm in taking the fresh Air in *Hyde-Park*? And then in driving to a Consort of Musick? These Entertainments are genteel, they unbend the Mind, refresh the Body, gratify the Senses, and have no Design upon Vertue.

I believe

I believe (answer'd *Ensebins*) the Air of *Hide-Park* is more wholesome than that of *Cheapside*; and that a Mouthful now and then, may be as good for the Stomach as a Vomit; but then I am persuaded a Dose of Country-Air would clear the Lungs, and carry off the Smoak from the *Thorax*, with less expence and danger. But do you think, *Neander*, the *Beaux* and *Belles* have no other Business there, than to take in a Cargo of fresh Air? alas! this is only the pretence, their design is worse complexioned; these appear in the height of Pomp and Equipage; and care is taken to set off their Charms with all the advantage of Fan and Artifice; they smother the defects of Nature under a Varnish of Silk, and plain the Furrows (Time has sunk in their Faces) with Pomatums; the Ring is a kind of *Noah's Ark*; they are, *Seven unclean Creatures, for two clean*. Ladies of Honour ride *Pall-mall*, with those of Pleasure; and you will scarce distinguish them but by their Equipage; for you must know a Miss out-glitters my Lady; she runs away with the Wives Jewels, as well as with the Husband's Heart, and commands his Purse with no less Empire than his Person.

Now pray, *Neander*, tell me, Is here no danger for a young Man, who is haunted by Passion, and leaves thinking at home? May not Love fly from one Coach into another? and may not an Intrigue begun in Publick be improved in Private to Prostitution? In a Conflux of both Sexes, many meet upon ill Designs; and when some are disposed to sell Pleasure, and others to purchase it, they seldom disagree upon the price; in a word, I do not say a turn in the Park is criminal; yet oftentimes it's unsafe.

Though I rank not the Love of Musick among the Signs of Predestination, yet I am no Enemy to the Science. I am not even for banishing it the Churches. Merthinks an Organ well touch'd gives a Majesty to the Duties of Religion, and rouses up the most drowzy Spirit to Devotion. I am not for turning Instrumental Musick out of Civil Conversation; nor do I think with *Plato*, that the Violin or Harp, have such an Influence on the Government, that one String more would untune the Common-wealth. I believe the *Ephori* of *Lacedæmon* had little Business on their Hands, when they stinted the Lute-strings, and that the Senate deserved rather to be laugh'd

at for seizing the Fiddle, than *Timothens* to be blamed for exceeding the publick Allowance.

However it's certain airy Musick raises sportive Humours, and tunes the Spirits to Diversion; it awakes Passion, warms the Blood, animates Fancy, and opens it to Pleasure. Indeed it's not directly Vicious; yet how far it may contribute to Vice, those who haunt those places are the most competent Judges; but the Vocal Musick is lewd to Scandal, and irreligious to Excess; here you have Lewdness in *Folio*, crowded in a *Complet*, and an *Iliad* of Mischief in a *Nut-shell*.

The Subject is always profane or amorous; and both to the height of the Poet's Fancy: It's better'd in Rhime and Metre to help the Memory of the Audience; it's garnish'd with Wit to make a deep Impression on the Intellect; so that here is Arsenick thrown into Ratsbane, Poison upon Poison; and besides an airy Tune, and a fine Voice serves for a Vehicle; they gild the Dose, take off the Unpalatableness of the Potion, and infuse Pleasure and Transport; when Lewdness is work'd up with Verse and Musick, the Mischief rises; these drive it stronger upon Fancy and Practice.

But if it be performed by a Woman, it's then Poison thrice boiled, mortal and sudden: It attacks not Vertue by Siege and Approaches, but like Gun-powder blows it up in a Moment; it's down-right Provocation; for tho' she seems to vent the Poet's Thoughts, she warbles out her own, and covers her Amours under the fabulous Names of *Cloris* and *Sylvia*. A Woman that courts in Musick, solicits in good earnest, and is either some Spark's Conquest already, or intends to make one. It's odds, that she who sings ill things will do worse; now when the Inclination is engaged by a fine Voice, and melting Notes; when the words recommend the Business of Lewdness, and the Sex pleads for it, whether Passion be not like to get the better of Duty, I leave (*Neander*) to your Consideration.

But certainly, Sir, (reply'd *Neander*) Vice is not in so flourishing, nor Vertue in so sinking a Condition as you would persuade me; who would not think by your Discourse, that Licentiousness and Impiety had called in the City Charter, and by a *Quo Warranto*, divested the Mayor and

and Aldermen of the Government, to invade it themselves? You draw a Picture of *London* in as black Colours, as the Scripture paints *Sodom* and *Gomorrhah*, and represent the Inhabitants *Sinners before the Lord, from the highest to the lowest*; but for all that a Gentleman may find sober and civil Company; and I am acquainted with Persons of Character, who make a Conscience of doing a bad thing.

I met once (said *Eusebius*) a poor Fellow poring on a Book; well *Tom*, (said I) what Book hast thou there? The Bible, Master, (reply'd *Tom*.) The Bible, said I! it's a good Book. There is (no doubt) sober and civil Company in Town, *here and there, if a body could but find it*; but bad so prodigiously over-tops it both in Number and Quality, that there is no coming at it; like Gold in the Mine, it must be found by Sweat and Labour; and then too, you must remove a Tun of Dust for one Ounce of Oar.

I believe also with *Tom*, that *here and there* a body may find a Conscience; but then you must be at the Charge of a *Hue and Cry*, or send the Constable with a Warrant upon the Expedition; for Conscience of late, like Debtors, sculks in the Dark, or walks the Streets *incognito*; and then when you have arrested it in Her Majesty's Name, a Man knows not what to make of it; it stands at Trifles, and breaks through Enormities; strains at a Flea, and swallows a Camel. *T—H—* took check at a Companion for singing a harmless Air upon the Lord's-day: *Fye, fye! I will not suffer* (said he) *the Sabbath to be thus profaned in my presence*. Yet the next Sunday this very Conscience invited the Sabbath-breaker to a Brothel. This Gentleman had a Conscience (no doubt) but something in disorder: One would have taken him for an *African Negro*, who places Beauty in Blackness, and Deformity in a clear Complexion. A gay Humour, in his Opinion, was a capital Crime, and Fornication an innocent Diversion. The Town and Liberties swarm with this Breed of Consciences; they are bought at easy Rates; nay, are become both a Drug and a Nuisance to Commerce and Society.

I have, indeed, drawn *London* in Black Colours; but methinks the Copy nicks the Original; and if it resembles *Sodom*, who can help it; the Fault lies in the Like-

ness of their Faces, not in the Painter. Indeed, I fear, a *Portapolis*, and a *London Beau*, are of the same Alloy; true to Flesh and Blood, but false to Sobriety and Goodness. And then for the *Belles*, they are cast in the same Mold. Vanity, Balls; and Dressing, run away with the *Palestine Ladies* Thoughts, and do not they monopolize our *London Ladies* time? In fine, the Foreign Vices of both Sexes thrive in our Climate; and if *Syria* has set us a Pattern, *London* out-does the Original. You will tell me *London* is a reformed City, how then dare I compare the Excesses of a Christian People with the hideous Disorders of *Pagans*? Is not this to set Idolatry above the Worship of the true God, and the Slaves of *Belzebub* above the Children of Jesus Christ? By no means; our Belief is excellent, but our Manners stark nought; and this is the Riddle, that Men should profess Christ, and disown his Maxims; reverence his Person, and despise his Commands: This is in some measure a forty-two Distinction, when Men honoured and fought for the King against the Tyranny of *Charles Steward*, and broke the fundamental Laws of the Nation, to maintain them.

Our Nation is a *Babel* of Religions, and the City a *Pantheon*: We have trick'd up Christianity in all Dresses, and modelled it to the Fantasie of *French* and *English* Fanaticism. One would think we were upon the discovery of new Passages into Heaven, as well as into the *South* and *Tartarean* Seas; or that each Man resolved to leave the High-road, to steal in at a By-lane.

Now when forty Religions snug under the Protection of the Law, few are really believed; for where Revelation is questioned, Practice will of course be brought to the Bar, and then it's odds, those Principles that favour Nature, will get the Advantage over those that restrain it. Tho' therefore *London* be a reformed City, a Latitude of Faith draws after it a greater of Principles, and when these are rotten, how shall our Behaviour be sound?

Well (said *Neander*) but suppose our Privy Council thinks fit to banish, by Proclamation, young Gentlemen twenty Miles from the Town, will they remove out of the reach of Vice, and stand clear of those disorders that wait on a City Life? I fantasie Vice is a Weed that overruns Villages as well as Towns; and a Man who re-

solved

solves to regale Appetite, may feast it in *Northumberland*; nay, and at a cheaper rate too. Now a low-season'd Pleasure that costs but a Crown, relishes better, and raises a more agreeable Sensation on the Organ, than a high-spiced Satisfaction that cost twenty; and then for God's sake, what business have unsettled Gentlemen on their hands in their Father's Houses? Do they not saunter away their Lives in Kennels and Stables; and run themselves down in the Chace of *Hares* and *Foxes*? So that living among Peasants and Beasts, they put on the Behaviour of those, and all the Brutality of these; and thus become half Man, half Beast: For, in a word, a Country-Gentleman is a compound of much Pride, and little Merit, a Sultan in a small Parish, a Tyrant in *busto*, and a Clown at length; he eats much, but drinks more, *March-Beer* is his *Nectar*, and Powder'd-Beef his *Ambrosium*; and when he has lain some Neighbours on their Backs at the Barrels-head, he shines in the top of his Glory.

You mistake me, *Neander* (replied *Eusebius*) Laziness and Plenty live in Hamlets, as well as Cities, and Vice always makes a part of their Retinue; there is no Sanctuary on this side the Moon against disorders; no Sin is a prerogative only granted to Heaven; and tho' Grace and Caution may preserve us from guilt, they don't from danger.

But however this Plague rages more in Town than in the Country, and carries off more *there* in one Parish in a Week, than here in a whole Country in a twelve Month. Temptations solicit, but bad Company spurs on to Wickedness. If in the Country Debauchery be sometimes practised, in Towns it's openly profess'd; here are Schools and Academies of this *black Art*, tho' not by Licence, yet at least by Connivance. Procureesses receive Stipends, and Gentlemen give *Procuracion-Money* as well for their pleasures, as their play: In short, Wickedness is brought to method, principle and demonstration; and I fancy we shall take up again our Ancestors Trunk-breeches, before we lay down this detestable Science. Let us suppose a Country-Gentleman is something too severe upon harmless Animals; is it not more pardonable to run down a Hare, than an Estate? To worry a Fox, than Conscience? Take things by the worst handle, and you may

may say he rides, hunts, shoots, and saunters away his Life: But a Town-Spark whores, blasphemes, drinks, dices away Health, Estate, and Soul into the bargain. The Diversion of *those* are mean, of *these* Vicious and Criminal. *Those* might live better, and *these* cannot worse. This being so, the Disorders of the former come not within view of those of the latter: *Those* spend their time like *Keepers*, *these* like *Fiends*. *Those* fall below the level of Gentlemen, and *these* of Christians.

What Remedy (says *Neander*?) More caution and less ill-nature in Parents, (answer'd *Eusebius*.) Had they more care of their Children, *these* might have more Sense of their Duty. There would be less Idleness in the World, and consequently less Vice. Let them apply sometimes their younger Sons to some honest Calling, that they may beat out of Industry and Labour a handsome Livelihood. This will employ their Thoughts, and their time, and keep Temptation at a distance. A Man that has honest Business on his Hands, seldom harbours dishonest Designs in his Heart: Besides, it secures his riper Years. Nobility alone (as the World goes) is a slender Inheritance. Good Blood must have good Coin to appear significant, and make a figure. A Gentleman that lives by his Wits must turn off Conscience, and will take leave of Religion. An Annuity of fifty Pounds *per Annum* sinks quickly to the lees. An unlucky throw of the Dice sets it a-tilt. And then a Miser's stipend casts him at least two Years behind hand. Poverty hangs heavy on all Men; it dispirits Courage, tempts Virtue, and dares a Man to be wicked; it casts him into Despair. Now a Gentleman cannot possibly fall into a worse Disease. For it deadens all thoughts of Birth, Honour, and Virtue, and forces him either to turn *Pad* on the Road, or *Sharper* in Town; and then he ends his Days by the Sword, or the Halter.

Parents must settle the Heir betimes: And it's more adviseable to do it a Year too soon, than a Month too late. The care of a Family will take up a great part of his time, and of his thoughts. And when they are tied to Business, they will scarce be at leisure to pursue criminal Pleasures. Generally our heart and our concerns lodge in the same apartment, and when *these* lie at home, that seldom stirs abroad.

T. J. was a young Gentleman of great Expectation. His Estate equal'd his Birth, and his Endowments both. Nature had join'd a graceful presence to an extraordinary Wit. So that it was hard to determine, whether he stood more obliged to Providence for the Symmetry of his Body, or the Ornaments of his Soul. He was past one and twenty, and I used all my Interest with his Father to settle him. I told him, in all Probability, his Son would prove like the Prophet's Figs, either *very good* or *very bad*, that his Complexion promised nothing ordinary. For he had great Passions, tho' his Education chain'd 'em: And if they got loose, they would drive him upon the greatest Extravagancies. A Match of 10000 *l.* was propos'd; and nothing remain'd to conclude it, but a Settlement of 500 *l. per Annum* in present upon the young Gentleman his Son. But the very word *Settlement* threw the old Gentleman off the hinges, and scared him into all the Postures of Impatience; such Scenes of Extravagance are seldom seen in Bedlam. Never Man in his Wits better topt the Frenzies of a Madman. He was one of those who rave after Money, when they have least use for it; and furnish their Pockets with great Viaticums, when they are almost at their Journey's end. I thought he was within an Ace of playing the *Desperado*, like *Apicius* the Roman, who stabbed himself with thirty thousand Pounds in Cash, out of an Apprehension of dying in Poverty; and thus not to die a Beggar, expir'd like a Madman. He was deaf to advice, and Passion had quite master'd Reason. He still supposed the same Pen that sign'd the Conveyance, would write his Execution; that Life and Money would go together.

The young Squire talked both of his Mistress and his Money, took check, and over acted the very Extravagances of his Father. He spurr'd to London, and left a thousand Curses behind him. Here he struck up with *Sharps*, *Scourers*, and *Alsations*. And to compleat his Misfortune, made acquaintance with the Players. He bounded from bad to worse, till he finished a course of Debauchery, and undid himself to revenge his Father's Unkindness.

The old Gentleman seem'd unconcern'd at his Son's Misbehaviour, and comforted himself with good Wives Proverbs, *An untoward Child (said he) will make a brave Man;*

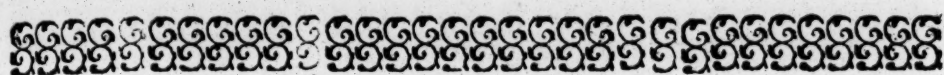
*Man ; He will take up when he has sow'd his wild Oats. But alas, he took up only Money, Blasphemies, Lewdness, and Irreligion : And all those accurs'd Principles that stupify Conscience, and give liberty to Appetite. I had the Fortune to meet this unhappy Gentleman. Gloominess, methought sat on his face, and Discontent appear'd in every motion. I suppose Conscience made some Efforts to rescue him, and that a kind Remonstrance might lecture him into his Duty. But no ; he was too far gone for a Cure. Vice had got the Ascendant, and twisted it self with his Nature. He seem'd rather fond than ashamed of his Excesses, and almost grown proud of his Misbehaviour. The Cause of his Melancholy lay in his Pocket. He had *Bassetted* away his Money, and his good Humour ; and as his Debts swell'd, his Credit sunk, and the Apprehensions of Bailiffs and Catch-poles dash'd all his Sweets with Gall and Wormwood.*

In fine, flesh'd in Debauchery, he was past Recovery : So that he run on in the broad Way, till a Stab stop't his career, to begin a longer course of torments. Now had his Father been kinder, he might have lived a fine Gentleman, and died a pious Christian. But the old Man's Avarice discarded him of all the Sentiments of a Parent. To save a penny, he expos'd his Son, and so ruin'd him eternally, to gratifie a Caprice.

Well (said *Neander*) this Cruelty of the Father should stand upon record as a perpetual *Caveat* to Parents, and the unfortunate End of the Son should scare young Gentlemen from a hair-brain'd Passion, debauch'd Company, and a Town-life. It's a blessing to reap instruction from anothers Misfortune ; but it's a severe Punishment to teach Posterity by our own. You have convinc'd me, dear *Eusebius*, of the danger of a Town-life ; and I will not run into the arms of Temptation. We are not secure when we fly the occasion, much less when we court 'em.

I applaud your Resolution (replied *Eusebius*) Temptations will certainly be too hard for good Counsel, and Incentives to Vice for Exhortation to Vertue. If you intend to fly Sin, retire from Danger. A pious Resolution is seldom Proof against a strong Invitation to Evil. *Neander* stay'd some Months with *Eusebius* ; he had such a respect for his Person, such a Veneration for his Vertue, that

that nothing was able to wean him from his Conversation, but a peremptory Command of his Father to return Home.



DIALOGUE II.

How EUSEBIUS behaved himself in the Management of his Estate.

*E*usebius had been train'd up in the Court and Camp ; yet he espous'd the Vices of neither : He remember'd the Covenant he had made in the Font of Baptism with his Saviour ; that there he renounced all Amity with the World, and promis'd to comply with all the Maxims of the Gospel. He endeavour'd therefore to keep up to the Height of the Engagement, and post-pon'd all temporal Pretensions to those of Eternity. A Sense of his Duty to his King and Country, fix'd him in both these Stations, not a view of Interest or Glory. And he has been often heard to say, *That those who are Slaves to Money, command Conscience, and scorn to truckle to the vulgar Notions of Good and Evil.* So that an interested Man throws off Honesty, when he takes up the Desire of Wealth ; and is as far from being a trusty Minister to his Prince, as a faithful Servant to his Master. In every Post he behaved himself with that Uprightness and Vigilance ; nay, and Success also ; so that all confess'd his Merits answer'd his Station ; but he never courted any Recompence, besides the Satisfaction of having discharg'd his Duty. His Ambition was to deserve Preferment, not by *Placets* to extort it ; nor was he ever heard to murmur (when put by) that Favour over-topt Merit, or that Recommendations took place of long Service. At the Revolution he withdrew from Business, and could never be persuaded to strike in with the new Government.

Having retreated from the Noise and Hurry of the Town, he began to consider the Instability of humane Things, and concluded that worldly Happiness is precarious, and stands not only upon a Precipice, but upon Ice too, altho' it's a difficult Point to prevail with a great Man, and to depend on his Grandeur, or to persuade him

him his Station is slippery, or that the *Babel* he has rais'd will sink into Dust, and bury him under the Ruins. If Princes fall, (said he) where shall Subjects find sure Footing? If we are unsafe, surrounded with Guards, what Security without them? If Friends turn treacherous, who dare we Trust? If Relations betray us, where must we expect Fidelity? All this World can give, may be taken away; so that the most wealthy, the most dignify'd Man upon Earth has this only advantage above the Peasant, that in a Moment he may tumble lower, and consequently be more miserable. For certainly he is less unhappy when Fortune never favour'd, than he she has forsaken. Why then do we unpeople Provinces to glut our Ambition, and raise Cities to build proud Palaces upon their Ruins? Why do we unbowel the Earth to feast our Avarice, and sweat under Ground to purchase Cares and Discontent above it? For who has most to lose, has always most to fear. The highest Station puts no Bounds to an ambitious Spirit, nor the vastest Treasures to a covetous one. When *Alexander* had even gotten *All*, he desired something more. His Wishes swell'd with his Conquest, and his Pride march'd farther than his Armies. His Treasures were Immense, but his Prodigality was greater, and his Wants surpass'd both. Money never makes a Man rich; the more he has, the more he covets. He is not poor that has enough, but he who possesses Millions, if he desires more.

Seeing therefore *Inconstancy*, *Cares*, *Dissatisfaction*, and either Emptiness or a Surfeit waits upon sublunary Enjoyments, why do we place our Happiness so low? And court Vexation of Spirit for our supream Felicity? God has seated our true Enjoyments above the Smoak of this inferior World, and out of the Reach of Casualties. In vain therefore we weary our selves in the Pursuit of real Satisfaction here, that is only to be found hereafter.

This Consideration so wean'd *Eusebius* from the Love of the World, that he flung up all Pretensions to future Advancements, and resolv'd to lay out his Time upon the Purchase of a happy Eternity. He kept his Word, for immediately he withdrew into the Country, and allied all the Qualities of a Gentleman, so handsomely with the Duties of a Christian, that it was hard to judge whether his Behaviour was more Genteel, or more Religious. He

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was wont to say, *Those lie under a Mistake, who fancy Vertue is an Enemy to good Breeding; that a Man must turn off Civility to commence a Saint, and disband from the Society of Men, to keep a Correspondence with God. No, no, (continu'd he) Christianity makes Men honest indeed, but not Clowns; it forbids Grimace, but not Sincerity; it puts a Mean between Foppishness and Rusticity, and forbids to show no Breeding by affecting to show too much. Vertue smooths the Brow as well as the Conscience, and knows to temper innocent Mirth with a seasonable Reservedness. So that we may keep up to the height of our Duty to God, without dropping our Obligation to Neighbourhood and Society.*

Eusebius divided the Day between Devotion, Business, and innocent Diversions; or rather he devoted it intirely to God; because he raised to a supernatural End the most indifferent Actions, and never withdrew his Thoughts from his Creator, even in the Government of his Family, or Heat of his Recreations. So soon as he was up, he retired into his Closet, and pass'd an Hour either in Prayer, or the reading of good Books. And he took such a Pleasure in them, that he renounced all unprofitable and profane Lectures, in which so many Persons employ their Time to avoid Idleness, by an Idleness no less vain, and often more dangerous.

He could not endure the ridiculous Affections of many Gentlemen, that is not only pass'd into a Custom, but almost into a Law; who suppose the least Insight into their Concerns forfeits their Patent, and throws 'em below the level of Quality; that it's a Mark of Peasantry to balance their Incomes with their Expences; or to take Notice whether their Revenues will keep touch with their Prodigality. One would think, Gentlemen took *Mr. Dryden's* Satyr in *Don Sebastian* for a Panegyrick, who follows 'em full Pockets, and empty Heads; great Estates in Land, and none in Wit.

Eusebius thought it no more below the Station of a Gentleman, to take Care of an Estate, than to possess one. He suspected not the Fidelity of his Steward, yet he thought it against the Laws of Prudence to trust him too far; for he knew Men are seldom careful of others Concerns, when they are negligent in their own: That it's a dangerous Experiment, to put even Honestly it self to the Trial.

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Trial. For alas, it's odds, that a Servant will cheat without Scruple, when he can without Discovery. He therefore every Week call'd his Steward to Account, view'd the Registers, and balanced his Receipts with his Expenses. And thus he kept within Compass, and lived handsomely upon his own; not upon the Sweat of poor Shopkeepers and Labourers. For he look'd on the taking upon Credit, as a blur to a Gentleman's Reputation. And he used to say, *To run deep in Merchant's Books, is an infallible Symptom of a sinking Estate, or a lost Conscience.* For who will run upon Tick, that has Money in hand? Or, who intends to pay his Debts, that has Credit to contract 'em, and no Fund to quit Scores?

He therefore modell'd his Family to his Estate, not to his Quality, and his Equipage to his Purse, not to his Title. For neither Patent nor Coronets are a Protection to Injustice. And certainly he is guilty of this Crime, who contracts Debts he knows himself unable to conceal: Indeed it's a Gentleman's Practice, and so is the Breach of all God's Commands: But alas, Quality can't sanctify an ill Action, nor unhallow a good one.

Eusebius could not endure to enter his Name in Merchant's Books; he would therefore rather defer a Purchase, than take it upon Trust. He compared Debtors to the Man in the Gospel, possess'd by a Legion of Devils; when one goes out, a hundred return to torment him. The thought of a Bailiff throws 'em into Fits, and the Sight of a Creditor, like the Eye of a Basilisk strikes 'em dead with Apprehension: So that they fear the Light, and like Owls and Bats range in Darknes and Obscurity; they confine themselves out of fear of being confined, and commit themselves close Prisoners to their Lodgings, not to be mew'd up in a Dungeon. In a word they lead the Lives of Criminals, fear every Man, are scorn'd by all, and pitied by none; and too often, in spite of Caution, they too took up in a Goal, and there die unregarded, like Rats, behind the Hangings.

One Day a young Gentleman gave *Eusebius* a Visit. He was one of those who place all their Concerns in this World, without a Regard to the other. An extravagant Admirer of Life, and yet seem'd to be tir'd of it. He lived so fast, that he out-lived a Year in one Day; and one would have thought his only Business was to post

his Grave. He had a handsome Estate, but too small for his Prodigality; it answer'd the Dignity of a Knight, but his Expences kept pace with those of a *Duke*; so that in a few Years it run upon the Lees, and his Credit sunk with his Fortune. A Creditor found him out, and with Submission demanded of his Worship the Payment of a Debt; but he had been so often haunted by such Spirits, that he had the knack of Laying, as well as raising them. For he was lavishing of Promises, though sparing in the Performance, and always gave great Hopes, but never Money.

Well, says *Eusebius*, (when he had dismiss'd the Man) may I inquire into the Fellow's Business. I suppose he forgot his Distance, and pass'd the Bounds of Civility; for you seem'd in a Ferment, and dismiss'd him with Warmth and Expostulation.

The Rascal (answer'd the Spark) duns me for a Debt of Ten Years standing; as if I enter'd his Books only Yesterday.

Nay, (said *Eusebius*, with a Smile) that's insufferable, What? To bait a Gentleman for an *old Debt* is unhand-some, and affronting too. For what was Passion given us, but to let lose upon so provoking Occasions? Those Rogues should be muzzled and bound up to their good Behaviour: Besides, the Sum perchance is inconsiderable.

A Trifle, (reply'd the Gentleman) not above a Hundred Pounds, the Price of a Winter and Summer Suit.

My Mind gave me (said *Eusebius*) the Fellow was a Taylor; his Gate and Impudence proclaim'd his Profession. A Varlet without Breeding, without Conscience, or Good-nature, thus to way-lay a Gentleman; to break in upon his Retirement, to shirk into an Audience: nay, and come upon so unwelcome an Errand, argues small Respect for Quality, and less Behaviour. And then, where is the Rascal's Conscience to demand a Debt of Ten Years standing? A Taylor's Right wears out with his Merchandize. And when a Gentleman throws off his Cloaths, he makes over the Obligation of Payment to his *Valet de Chambre*. A Taylor should no more think of asking a Debt, than a Gentleman of paying it. But, dear Sir, Raillery apart. Can Time prescribe against Justice? Must a Man forfeit his Right, because you fling up your Innocence? Or is it a less Impudence to refuse a just Payment,

than to solicit it? Believe me, Sir, he is not to blame who asks his Due, but he who compels him. And it's less becoming to live at free Quarter upon Merchants and Tradesmen, than to demand Satisfaction for the Grievance.

You remember, I presume, that once upon a Time, a *Daw* of great Family, but small Revenues, had a Months Mind to be fine. He was low in Cash, but flush of Credit, and so took up on Tick a gawdy Equipage. He lorded it among his Neighbours, and forgetting his Pedigree, pretended Alliance to the Bird of Paradise. But in the height of his Prosperity his Creditors attack'd him; and being unable to return either Money or Security, they strip'd him of his Bravery, and turn'd him into the Woods, *in puris naturalibus*. And then all those Sy-cophants, that fawn'd upon his Fortune, laugh'd at his Folly, and turn'd Sir *John Daw*, in plain *Jack*; nay, and threw him among the *Rooks* for his Punishment.

There needs no Key to the Fable. The Application sits on the Surface. Nay, our Sparks have been at the Charge of turning it into real Story, and so are sad Instances both of the Bird's Pride on the one side, and Folly on the other; and though they barter not their Quality, they are strip'd of its Support; and then they knock off naked of Ornament, and consequently of Regard. For Nobility, without Cash, makes but a lean Figure: one Ounce of Gold weighs forty Coats of Arms. Though the Blood of a *Hero* rowls in your Veins, if Chink has forsaken your Pocket, you must shear off to *Rooks* for Maintenance; for Regard rises and falls by the secret Influence of Metal.

Pray, Sir, a Paraphrase if you please, (reply'd the Gentleman) on the Parable; for, I confess, I am unable to see through it; unless you intend by a fly *Innuendo* to condemn me to the Trade of *Purse-taking* on the King's High-way. Under Favour, (said *Eusebius*) it's not my Province to set any Man his Task; but I am a kind of *Figure-finger*, and pretend to tell young Men's Fortune, not indeed by the help of the black Art, but by their own Conduct. You take upon trust with both Hands, and pay with neither; you wade up to the Chin in Taylor's Books, you sink over Head and Ears in Vintners; card away 500*l.* in a Night, and fling into a Miss's Lap 1000*l.* maintain

one Family in the Country, another in the Town. You receive 2000 *l. per Annum*, and disburse *Five*. Now, where must this Prodigality end, but in Poverty, Contempt, and Despair? And when a Gentleman is waited on by three such Attendants, he is equip'd for any Practice. Necessity is a bad Counsellor, and Despair a worse; and I can assure you, they have set some Gentlemen upon unwarrantable Enterprizes: For when they have no Fund to live on, they must live by their Wits, and then they are forc'd to cast up their Accounts at *Old-Bailies*, and to pay the Reckoning at *Hide-Park* Corner.

Young Gentlemen must live up to their Birth (said the Gentleman.)

Provided (answer'd *Eusebius*) their Purse runs even with their Quality. For otherwise Title must stoop to Revenues, and Figure must shrink to Necessity. It's ill Husbandry to glitter in Equipage like a Prince for a Twelve-month, and then to sneak into a Corner with a solitary Lacquey, down at Heels, and out at Elbows; to turn off from a Guinea Ordinary to the Basket, or to stand obliged for a Meal, to the Courtesy of Relations all your Life after. But this is not our Case neither. Few Gentlemen break their Estates by stretching them to their Birth, but beyond it. A Squire will vie Prodigality with a Lord, and a Knight with a Duke. Now alas; how can Two Thousand *per Annum* hold out with Ten? It must jade and founder in a short time, and lay its Master, like a tired *Tit*, in the Mire.

But suppose these Misfortunes wait not upon you, where is Conscience?

Nay, (reply'd the Gentleman) in good Hands I assure you. For certainly, Conscience may be well, though my Estate be sick. I may balance Accounts with God, tho' I am behind-hand with my Neighbour.

Not so easily neither (said *Eusebius*.) For when a Gentleman takes upon Credit, Conscience enters Bond for the Payment; and if the Estate cannot answer the Incumbrance, that will be uneasy. Pray, Sir, (continued *Eusebius*) is there no such Law as, *Thou shalt not steal*?

Without doubt, answer'd N. N.

And does this Precept take in (said *Eusebius*) only Pads and Cut-purses?

It forbids (said N. N.) all Acts of Injustice; nay, and restrains Desires. It's ill even to covet an ill thing; and he who designs to over-reach his Neighbour, transgresses the Law, as well as he who deceives him.

Your Casuistry (reply'd *Eusebius*) is sound and orthodox, but not your Practice. For do you not force poor Creatures to change their Labour into a continual Attendance; to saunter away their time in an Anti-chamber, and then to return Home with empty Promises? Nay, and it's often taken for a Civility, not to be affronted; and for Payment *in part*, not to be deny'd (with a *God damn ye*) for the whole. Now when a Creditor must be eternally upon the Trot to come up to his Debtor, and ply at all the *Coffee-houses* for Intelligence of his Haunts, the Irons cool at Home, Trade smks, Work is at a stand, and a Bankrupt treads upon his Heels. For how shall a Merchant pay his Debts, who receives none? Now, Sir, here is *lucrum cessans* on the one hand, and *damnum emergens* on the other, and in the Sight of God you stand responsible for both: They will be put to your Accounts, and you must either repair them here, or suffer for them hereafter.

For God's Sake, Sir, (said N. N.) who bids those *Rascals* run upon the Haunt, and trace my Motions; nay, and break my Head with importunate Solicitations? Must I answer for their Folly, and pay for their Extravagance? Let them keep within Doors, and carry on their Trade. I will not intermeddle in their Concerns.

That is, Sir, (reply'd *Eusebius*) if they will sit down with their Loss, you are satisfy'd; if they will take your Honour for their Security, and cross Scores for Promises, or be content with a Lacquey with a Cudgel for Payment, I easily believe you. If all the Creditors in the Nation will vouchsafe to burn their Registers, Spencers' thriffts will be at the Expence of the Execution, and applaud their Generosity. And if they please to give good Security never to importune you with unpleasant Visits, you will secure them of Non-payment.

I fancy you are got into a Vein of Drollery. But the Mischief is, with some People, a Jest improves into an Argument, and Raillery grows up into Reason. But deceive not your self: Those who put off Payment with dilatory Pretences, not only bid their Creditors neglect

their Trade and Family, but force them: For without Importunity nothing is done. They must beg for their Due, as hard as for an Alms; and spend more Time in recovering their Money, than in earning it. It's as easy to dig the Oar out of the Mines of *Potosi*, as to importune a Debt out of the Pocket of a Prodigal.

But if a poor Tradesman, by such an Injustice, chance to go down in the World, to suffer a Seizure of his Goods, or his Person, you must account for the Damages also. For you are the Cause of his Misfortune, and by consequence must answer for it.

To be plain, (said N. N.) my Estate lies sick of a Consumption; the Dice have prey'd upon its Vitals, and Riot has brought it so low, that I fear it's now past Recovery. I cannot cancel past Scores, without throwing myself into a Necessity of drawing in my Retinue, or living upon Courtesy. Now either Way exposes my Reputation to the publick Obloquy, and my Person rather to Raillery than Compassion. For Misfortune in our Age is a Jest of it self, and a little fooling upon the Subject makes bad Circumstances insupportable. When a Coat is thread-bare, how easy is it to pick a Hole? When a Man can scarce keep his Head above Water, a small Weight plunges him to the Bottom. Though he may struggle against one *Committimus*, a Leash will certainly sink him in a Dungeon; and these Furies seldom appear single. I confess my Inclination leans not towards the *King's-Bench*, or the *Marshalsea*. I am for a free Air, and hate to lie at the Mercy of a Turn-key.

It's more easy (answer'd *Eusebius*) to commit, than to excuse an Injustice. Estate-diseases, like those of the Body, must be cured by a slender Diet. Riot and high Fare enforce the Fever, enflame the Blood, and breed ill humours. And I have known some Estates brought back from the last Agony to a perfect State of Health and Vigour, by a short Pittance of Barly-broth. I persuade you to make a Trial of the *Recipe*, enter into a Course of Physick. But then (as you hope for Benefit) come not within the Smoak of the Town; the Remedy requires the fresh Air of the Campaign, Retirement and Solitude. To speak plain, retrench Expences, dismiss Equipages, reform Attendants, reserve one fourth Part to your Revenues for Subsistence, and three for Creditors. Five

hundred *per Annum* well managed, will go farther than two thousand ill. And altho' the Sum answers not the Extravagancies of a Town Debauchee, it will keep touch with the Occasion of a sober Gentleman. For I can assure you, Birth is not so expensive as Prodigality; Gravity of Behaviour and Moderation set it off, and gave it a finer Lustre than all the costly Trappings of Pomp, Equipage, and Riot.

But People will laugh, if you shrink your Figure, pack up for the Country, and stint Expences? Suppose they do; to stifle their Mirth, will you pawn an Estate? And play the Fool to buy off their Fooling? Will you rather stand their Scorn, than their Merriment? And be despised in Poverty, than rally'd in a comfortable Fortune? Retrieve your Estate, and Credit will rise in Proportion; he never wants Regard, who is stock'd with Money, nor he Contempt, who is unfurnish'd.

Sparing and Parsimony lead not to *Newgate*, or *the King's-Bench*; but Prodigality, Gaming, Wine, and Misses: Creditors will bear more Years with Men who take sure Measures to pay their Debts, than Days with those who increase them.

But methinks Conscience and Duty should take place of all Temporal Views. A Christian that believes there is a Hell to punish Injustice, should not make himself miserable beyond Redemption, upon a groundless Forfeiture of Reputation. For on my Word, dear Sir, Credit in the next World is no Protection; when once Injustice has plunged you into Flames, the Reputation of *Alexander* will not bail you.

Now, (as I said before) it's a heavy Injustice to pay Merchants only with empty Promises, and yet more heavy to return for Ware, Curses, and Imprecations. For to be free with you, Sir, Gentlemen that discharge their Debts with such adulterate Coin, enhance the reckoning, and commence Thieves and Robbers. Indeed they play not at small Game upon the King's High-way, nor take a Purse with a Pistol in their Hand, and a *damye deliver* in their Mouths. They have more Concern for their Skin, than to embark in an Enterprize that leads to a Halter. But however, tho' they endanger their Necks, they stab their Conscience; and if they stand clear of the Infamy of Padding, they avoid not the Guilt

Guilt. For to refuse Payment is no less an Injustice before God, than to plunder on the High-way.

God forbid, I should refuse Payment, (said N. N.) But alas, I am in no Condition. My Debts run high, and my Estate low; Taxes sweep away one part, my Family another; and when present Expences exceed Receipts, how shall I cross out the past?

Under Favour (said *Ensebins*) you refuse by your Conduct, though not by your Words, and that is more significant, nor less criminal. You rattle in a Coach and Six, glitter in Embroidery, hector in Taverns, and sleep upon the Dice. You take up at Interest, and yet pay none. Is not this the straight-way to beggar your self first, and then all you deal with? For is not such a Mismanagement the High-road to Beggary, and consequently does it not lead you into an Impossibility of paying? If you refuse not Payment, apply due Means, lessen Charges, and stint Prodigality to mere Necessaries: This is your Interest as well as Duty. And it no less concerns your Estate, than your Soul. For in a Word, (I must repeat it) without Reparation of Damages, there is no Salvation. Who willfully leaves this World in Debt, must pay it in the other; and though he eludes the Prosecution of Creditors here, he cannot avoid the Justice of the Almighty hereafter.

The Gentleman heard good Counsel, and was within an Ace of following it. He saw his Estate lay at Stake, together with his Soul, and that he posted on to Beggary and Damnation. He confess'd *Ensebins's* Advice was the most secure, though the less palatable; and good husbandry might retrieve his sinking Fortune, and furnish Supplies for Use and Payment. But on a sudden, forsooth, he would turn Politician, and play'd the Fool out of a Principle of Wisdom. The Matter calls (said he) for Deliberation and Thought; Repentance treads on the Heels of quick Resolutions; pray give me leave to pause before I leap from one Extream to the other.

He took leave of *Ensebins*, and posted to Town, and with the same Speed to his Ruin. For here Prodigality began his Misfortune, and ill Counsel compleated it. He subpoena'd a *juncto* of desperate Debauchees to his Lodgings; he open'd the State of his Concerns, and the Advice of *Ensebins*. But he might as well have flown for Sanctu-

struary into a Den of *Assassins*, or secur'd his Purse in the Hands of a High-way-man, or learn'd the Way to Paradise from the Devil himself, as expect wholesome Advice from those who follow the worst, and place Interest before Conscience. These *Harpies* had given a helping hand to the Gentleman's Misfortune, and thrust him blindfold upon the Brink of the Precipice. They gain'd by his Losses, and drain'd his Purse at Play to fill their own; so that to counsel Parsimony, was to plead against themselves, and dam up the Channel that supplied their Debaucheries with Nourishment.

What wonder therefore their Advice was as contrary to *Ensebins's*, as their Designs? Desperate Remedies (say they) are only to be apply'd in desperate Diseases. Who will lop off an Arm or a Leg for a Pimple? Or drink *Antimony* for a *Tartian*? When there is no Cure, something may be ventur'd; but when there is no Danger, take not a Bowl of *Ratsbane* for a Preservative. Your Estate, Sir, is incumber'd, but not spent; it runs low, but I suppose Merchant's Registers are not like enchanted Circles, when once you are in, there is no stepping out. One lucky Chance at Dice will rescue all, and make Scores even. Fortune has indeed frown'd upon you; she will begin to smile. She is a Female, fond of Change, unaccustom'd to Constancy; and when she has thrown off her Spleen and Ill-nature, she over-sets a Man with Kindness and Courtship. *T.W.* was brought to a solitary Guinea; but then good Luck veer'd about into the right Corner, and this single Piece fetch'd back twenty thousand; so that he had never soar'd so high, had he not fell so low, nor escap'd his Ruin, had he not come so near it.

This Remedy was indeed more dangerous than the Disease, and as mortal to Estate-distempers, as Poison to those of the Body. However, they stole upon his blind side; so that he surrender'd not only without Resistance, but even with Pleasure and Transport. Gaming was his predominant Passion, and this easily reconciled his Palate to the Prescription; nay, and turn'd the Medicine into a Regale. You have nick'd (said he) the Point. He that cures disjointed Estates by Recreation, and conveys Health thro' Pleasure, is a Surgeon in good earnest. He falls then to Gaming; but alas, cogg'd Dice were

too hard for good Luck; and Fortune, that turn'd Tail before, now quite deserted him. His Bags droop'd, and his Credit hung the Wings; his Money was flown; and though his Lands changed not their Place, they went over to other Landlords. All his Companions, like Rats in a Storm, abandon'd the sinking Vessel, and he found himself in a Goal, before he dream'd of a Bail. Here this unfortunate Gentleman sees his past Errors, but no Way to correct 'em. Lost Grace may be recovered by Tears, but not Estates. We may weep our selves into Heaven, not into a Fortune, nor out of Confinement. He measures a great Length, that vaults from Abundance into Poverty. The Fall dashes in Pieces not only the Prospect, but the very Hope of a return. Nothing remains but the Sense of the present Calamity, and the Remembrance of a past Felicity. So that like the Damn'd, they are tormented with the Pain of Loss, as well as with that of Sense; and the Ghost of their darling Pleasures, revive merely to perform the Office of Executioners. But did these poor Gentlemen understand this obvious Piece of Chymistry, to transmute Necessity into Vertue, to bear, with Resignation to Providence, the Misfortune, Folly and Sin have drawn upon them, I would pronounce them happy in their Misfortune; but alas, they rather rage than repent, deplore their Restraint, without dropping one Tear for their Debauchees, the Cause of it; and so in the End they step from one Dungeon to a worse, from a temporal Confinement, to an eternal one. This is the end of those who receive Favours without Thanksgiving, and Punishment without Humiliation; that neither praise God for his Mercies, nor pray to him under his Judgments.

How Eusebius behaved himself to his Domesticks.

Tho' *Eusebius* retired from the Town, he intended not to turn *Hermit*, nor to disband from Society and Conversation. He was no publick Enemy, like *Timon* to his Species, nor a Friend to Sorrow and Ill-nature. He knew the Life of a Christian might stand with that of a Gentleman; that he might comply with all the Duties of Religion, without stepping below his Station. He therefore kept up an Equipage, rather genteel than great; it

it answer'd his Quality, and was proportion'd to his Revenues. So that he neither incumber'd his Estate with unseasonable Expences, nor better'd it by a sordid Parsimony. He was content with his present Fortune, and neither desired to be greater, nor fear'd much to be less. For indeed he was too low for Envy, and yet too high for Contempt.

1.

He rather behav'd himself to his menial Servants like a Father, than a Master; and always treated them as free-born Subjects, not Slaves. He could not endure the Conduct of those Gentlemen who shew less Concern for a poor Domestick, than a Beast of Burden, and let him live a Brute without Religion or Instruction, so he carries on their Business, and works himself down to support their Riot. He was sensible the difference even between a Prince and a Peasant lies in Fortune, not in Nature; that their Pretensions in the next World are equal; and that even in this a Slave in the Sight of God, that practises Vertue, is more noble than an Emperor overgrown with Sin. He thought therefore himself obliged in Duty and Conscience to take care of their Souls, as well as of their Bodies; to allow Instructions as well as Food, and to accompany their Wages with an Addition of good Counsel.

2.

For this Purpose he entertain'd a Chaplain, whose Business was only to instruct the Family, to instil the Principles of Christianity into the Hearts of his Domesticks; to train them up in Vertue, withdraw 'em from Vice, and to bring them into Acquaintance with their Duty; which is seldom known, and more seldom practis'd by this servile Rank of Men. *What Religion are you of,* said a Lady of my Acquaintance to her Maid? *Religion, forsooth,* (answer'd the poor Creature) *is for Gentlefolks.* She supposed Drudgery was the End of her Creation; that Expectation of future Happiness lay out of her Way. And thus she liv'd in *Christendom* like a *Barbarian* in the Wilds of *America*, without Hope of a future Reward, or fear of Punishment. Hence Gentlemen's Families serve too often for Nurseries to *Newgate*, and the *Stews*. For their Dependants being brought up in Idleness on the one hand, and Licentiousness on the other, (when dismiss'd)

they know not where to retire. And so the Maids live Prostitutes, and the Men die Thieves and Robbers. Whereas did they train up their Domesticks in Christian Principles, and innure them to the Practice, they would prove more useful even to the Management of their Temporal Concerns, and less burthensome to the State.

For certainly a Man that has no Principle of Religion, has less of Morality. Few People are just, that have no Reason to be so, and many Invitations to Treachery and Deceit. With what Security therefore can a Master employ those in Business, who only change the Discovery of a Theft with the Sin, and vary the Fact (like the *Lacedemonians*) into a Vertue? Alas, Infidelity will baffle Caution, and over-reaching will beat out more Plots than an *Argus* can discover. Who has a Conscience needs no Spies, and who has none will out-wit a Hundred.

3.

Ensebius would never admit a Debauchee into his Service. He thought no Man would be faithful to his Master, who was a Traitor to his God; much less careful of anothers Concerns, who was forgetful of his own. Besides, Vice is diffusive, and spreads by Commerce like the Plague. One wicked Person throws the Contagion among a thousand, and it's odds some will take it up; and when once it gains upon a Family, it seldom stops, till the Infection becomes epidemical, and the Distemper incurable. So that he always examin'd more narrowly a Servants Behaviour than his Abilities; and oftentimes a good Life atoned for Unexperience. Clumsiness (said he) may be polish'd by civil Conversation, and Skill may be improved by Practice, but vitious Habits seldom wear off: They are too stubborn for Instruction, and Proof to Homily, and good Counsel.

4.

When he was forced to reprehend, he avoided Heat, and never flew out into Strains of Indecency. He knew that Anger was ungovernable and clamorous; and as unfit to give, as to take Advice. It drowns Reason by Noise and Tumult, and seldom pronounces a just Sentence, but when it intends an unjust one: It throws a Man off his Guard, and even below his Dignity, and betrays those Weaknesses we should blush to own upon the Torture. Hence he used to say, that a cholerick Correction was seldom

seldom well taken ; that it rather irritated, than heal'd ; and struck out Resentment, not Sorrow. Wherefore his Words were as mild as his Countenance ; and the Sedateness of his Gesture answer'd the Sweetness of his Language. Nothing opprobrious pass'd his Lips, nothing tempestuous, nothing unbeseeming the Mouth of a Gentleman, or the Ears of a Christian. In fine, his Reprimands tasted always stronger of Honey than of Gall ; and they were received by some with Repentance, by all with Patience, and by none with Indignation.

Some Gentlemen of his Acquaintance took the Liberty to tell him, that his Mildness would soon meet with Contempt, and his Affability with Scorn ; that these under-rate Mortals are as incapable to be moved by Kindness, as to practise it ; that a Cane mends more Faults in a Quarter, than dogmatizing in a Twelve-month ; and that nothing affects their Will, but what lies heavy upon their Sense. But those Sparks talked just as they acted, and only disapproved *Ensebins's* Method by commending their own. However, an unlucky Accident admonish'd one of these Censors of his Mistake, and convinced him *ad hominem*, that Roughness is not always in Season, and that Blows rather provoke, than awe an Inferior, and sooner stir up Disobedience than Respect.

By chance poor *Dick* reaching the Oil to his Master, liquor'd his Wig, and the Over-sight spread to the borders of a new Suit *A-la-mode*. The poor Fellow suffer'd the Rack in the very Accident, and expired the Guilt of the Offence in the very Commission : But the *Squire*, who was extremely smitten with Drapery, and rated the Ornaments of his Back, above all the Embellishments of his Brain, broke out into all the Indecencies of Language and Gesture. He first damned poor *Dick* to the Pit of Hell ; then Son of a Whore'd him to all Intents and Purposes ; and, in fine, bedaub'd him with all the unbeseeming Tropes of *Billingsgate*, and the *Bear-garden*. The very Knowledge of such mean Stuff misbeseems a Gentleman ; but the speaking it degrades him, recalls his Patent, and breaks his Escutcheon. *Dick* begg'd his Pardon, but Rage got the Ascendant over *Monsieur's* Reason, and Fury would not hearken to any Articles of Accommodation. The Spark flew from the Table (the Oil had fired the Brain) and pursued *Dick* with a Cane in his Hand, and

Oaths

Oaths in his Mouth: The poor Wretch would have compounded for a Limb; but when he saw no Way open for a Retreat, he fac'd about: The Cain had beat out all Respect, and Self-preservation took place of Duty and Obedience. He returned with Usury the Blows he had received. In fine, the Man master'd the Master; and plain *Dick* over-top'd *Right Worshipful*. The Company step'd in between; some stared, and others rail'd, and all laugh'd at the Comedy. After Dinner, *Eusebius* took the Gentleman aside, and minded him of his Extravagance.

I suppose, Sir, (said he) you have drop'd your former Opinion. That an high Hand, and an imperious Brow, keep Servants to their Duty. The best way to persuade them to obey with Respect, is to command with Moderation. Judge first of Faults before you punish them, and never swell a Fly into an Elephant. You must wink at some Offences, laugh at others, and chastise all with Calmness and Charity: Put a difference between a Chance, and a deliberate Action. Treat not an innocent Over-sight, and a malicious Treason, with the same Severity: Proportion the Pain to the Fault; and so when the Offence is trivial, take care the Punishment be not exorbitant. When a Servant deserves a Cane, it's time to dismiss him; and it's more honourable to turn him off, than to stoop to the Function of a Town *Beadle*. In a Word, Sir, remember that to engage with an Equal is dangerous, with a Superior foolish, and with an Inferior contemptible.

5.

Eusebius's Conduct won all his Domesticks; not only their Hands, but also their Hearts lay at his Devotion: They carry'd on his Interest with as much Eagerness, as if they promoted their own: They respected him as a Master, and loved him as an indulgent Father. And the Fear of displeasing him, kept them more within the Compass of their Duty, than the Apprehension of Punishment; and they rather desired to feel his Anger, than to deserve it.

6.

Swearing and Blaspheming are comprehensive Vices; and if Custom had the Secret of Transmutation, (like Chymists) they would challenge a Place among the Virtues.

tues. Christians who are forbid to swear by any thing, assume Liberty of swearing by all Things : One would think the Breach of the Precept, was the only Design they aim'd at ; and Disobedience to God's Commands, their only Diversion. Gentlemen, without doubt, first brought this hellish Dialect into Fashion, and Servants who are their Betters, have improv'd it.

Great Gentlemen's Families have laid down the Language of their Country, to take up that of the Damn'd ; and it's hard to determine whether those Masters, who permit such hideous Expressions, are more guilty than those who speak them.

Eusebius could not endure this execrable Jargon. It sower'd his Blood, and made his Hearing a Burthen. A thousand good Qualities in a Servant, made no Atonement, in his Opinion, for this only bad one ; and though he pitied those Failures that favour'd of Weakness, he never gave quarter to Blaspheming : *Other Vices* (said he) *make bold with God's Commands, this outrages his very Person ; it adds Insult to Disobedience, and Contempt to Abuse : It's a Symptom of no Religion. For who will revile the very Being he adores ? Or rally and worship the same Object ? And then what respect can a Master expect from him that turns upon his Creator, and flies in the Face of the Omnipotent ?* In fine, (continued he) they are Nufances to human Nature, and deserve rather to be prosecuted as publick Enemies to our Species, than to be entertain'd as Domesticks. He endeavour'd to reclaim them by Reproof and Exhortation ; but when he saw no Amendment, he dismiss'd 'em without Delay. No Intercession of Friends, or Prospect of Interest, could persuade him to harbour these declar'd Enemies of the Almighty. They affront the Vertuous, debauch the Unwary, and are both a Scandal and Grievance to the Family they live in. Rebels to God should be barr'd of Protection, no less than Traitors to their Prince. To receive the Guilty, is to countenance their Crime, as really in one Case as in the other.

Had Gentlemen a due Regard for the Honour of God (*id est*) were they Christians in good earnest, these wretched Liberties of their Servants, would stop their Blood, and make them sweat with a Disgust and Horror they would discard these puny Giants who dare defy the

Omni

Omnipotent, and invoke his Name to burlesque his Justice; they would clear their Families of all these Rakes, that infect the Air they breath, and the Earth they walk on. That by a strange Metamorphose, turn the Dwellings of Men into the Habitation of Devils; and the Torments of the Damned into the Diversion of the Living: For I can assure you, Gentlemen's Houses are too often a lively Picture of Hell; there you will see all the Lewdness of Hell, and here all the Language of that cursed Region, with only this difference, that those unhappy Creatures below blaspheme God, of whom they hope no Mercy; and these above lampoon him, of whom they expect Pardon: Nay, here are Devils also; not indeed by Nature, but Practice, and almost every thing besides Brimstone and Despair. Would Gentlemen reform this unbeseeming Dialect, Servants would cast it off; but when it is spoke in the Parlour, it's taken up in the Kitchen, it walks in the Stables, and steals into all the servile Offices of the House. For Servants wear their Master's Vices, as well as their Livery, and copy their Actions, to purchase their Favour: In that, cursing, swearing, and indeed all Vice is degrading; but when it gets into great Houses: When Nobility abets it, and Quality gives it Countenance and Entertainment, it changes Complexion, and becomes modish and creditable. And this is the Reason Imprecations and Oaths are so far frequent among us; for an innocent Over-sight, we send a Servant to the Devil, and call down upon him all the Diseases, all the Plagues of this World and the next. Oaths are used by all Person, and to compleat the Impiety on all Occasions, we court and quarrel in this Language: We express our Kindness and Aversion, our Joy and our Grief in the same Terms. Success is waited on by Oaths, as well as Disappointments; and they set off Temper as well as Passion. In fine, they run through all our Discourse; they stand up in the room of Sense; and one would think we were furnish'd with no other Rhetorick or Reason. His Care wrought good Effects in the Family, and his Example better; Swearing was an unknown Language, as well as Ribaldry; and all those Vices which hover about great Men's Palaces, found no Entertainment, no Admittance in his. When there arose any Contest between his Domesticks, he took Cognizance of it himself, and

and compos'd all Differences with the Equity of a Judge, and the Charity of a Father. No Body refus'd to stand to his Arbitration, because they were sure Partiality would have no hand in the Judgment; but that unbiass'd either by Aversion or Kindness, he examin'd the Cause without taking Notice of the Persons. And indeed his Conduct spread such a Reputation abroad of his Equity and Wisdom, that his Neighbours put their Concerns in his Hands, and rather appeal'd to his Arbitration, than to the Law, that enriches indeed the Lawyer, but beggars the Plaintiff; who often gains the Suit, but loses his Estate.

This Piece of Charity rais'd an unexpected Enemy, who attack'd *Eusebius* with Might and Main. The Story deserves a Relation. It will delight and instruct, and so convey Profit through Pleasure.

Philargyrus's Character.

Philargyrus (for so I must christen the Gentleman) was born to a low Fortune [*Rascal in Yorkshire* was the Place of his Birth,] and the Denomination jump't with his Person. He only inherited the common Benefits of Mankind; the Earth to walk on, the Air to breath, and all the Rivers of the World to drink: Being leanly provided by Nature, he resolv'd to set up for himself; and though he wanted Materials, he was not ill furnish'd of Resolution: He had no mind to wander upon the Common: Poverty seem'd to him unfashionable, Dependance hung uneasy, and he thought Courtesy an uncertain Revenue. He had receiv'd of Nature a lively Wit, and of Education a weak Conscience; he improv'd that by Study, and wore out this by Practice; so that at last he turn'd it out of Service, or left it for a Pawn with a Broker: For Conscience and Lawyers are not to be reconcil'd; they can scarce be brought to lodge under the same Roof, but never to lie in the same Bed. Money was his Passion; and if he could secure the End, he never bogled at the Means. He charg'd through all the Niceties of Morality, and scorn'd to stop at hard Names invented by Schoolmen, and fear'd by Fools. Honour (said he) and Conscience are pretty Things enough; they jingle upon the Ear, but not in the Pocket; they are orthodox in Speculation, but heretical in Life

and Commerce. A Man that intends to thrive, must not steer by Foreign Opinion, nor startle at a Set of formal Notions, that cramp Merit, pall the Spirits, and confine Activity to a small Compass: These Principles took off Restraint, made room for vigorous Efforts, removed the Difficulties of Business, and pointed out a short cut to Expedition and Success: For a Man that has discharg'd Conscience, laid open the Inclosures of Good and Evil, thrown off the Incumbrances of Right and Wrong, and melted down *Just* and *Unjust* into the same Mass; that regards Generosity as Farce and Ceremony, Pity as childish Softness, and Honesty as a check to Industry; that haggles away his Credit for Six Pence, and his Soul for a Shilling, has Line enough to sport his Net in, and Elbow-room more than enough for Invention.

We must not therefore wonder a Man thus equipp'd for Advancement met with Success; for Fortune and no Conscience are generally on the same side; and though sometimes she dotes on young Men, she often flings her favours upon Reprobates. He was by Constitution one fourth of a Rascal, (*i. e.*) *Scrivener* and *Sollicitor*; and to be cheat all over, he commenced *Attorney*. So that this one Man, possess all the ill Qualities of the Species, without the allay of a good one; he was *Scrivener* on the one side, *Sollicitor* on the other, and Monster in every Limb.

He had glean'd up all the little Artifices of his Profession, and augmented the number by a fresh supply of his own Invention; for he was sensible time and use wear out intrigues, as well as Cloaths; and that the Gentlemen of the Robe must recruit their Forces, no less than those of the Sword; that a Legerdemain once discover'd, like a maimed Soldier, is unfit for Service. In a Word, his Inclinations were ungenerous, his Practice unwarrantable; he lay below the Passion of Love, and flew above that of Compassion; he broke through all the Barriers of Blood, through all the Regards of Honour, and Principles of Humanity. And indeed, what Vertue can take hold of a Rake, when Interest comes in Competition?

There are Lawyers of Fortune, as well as Soldiers; and as these will fight on any side for Pay, those will head on any for a Fee, and often on both. *Philargyrus* was of this Temper; he examin'd his Client's Purse, before

he enter'd into the Merits of the Cause, and always pronounc'd the Suit just, if the Man was wealthy; but where there was no *Money*, there was never any *Title*; *Gold* and *Right* went hand in hand, and *Wrong* perpetually waited upon *Poverty*. He play'd first his Tricks of Legerdemain in Town; he wheedled People into his Snares, and decoy'd them into their Ruin. But time laid open the Imposture, and unmask'd his Artifice; so that at length, like frighted Birds, the Citizens grew wild; they took Wing at his very Shadow, and he could never come within Shot. And what wonder that Reason should teach Caution, as well as Instinct; and ill Usage clap Men on their Guard, as well as Beast.

He changes therefore his Camp, and wheels off into the Country to forage the Peasant, as he had gull'd the Merchant; he is armed *cap a pied* with *Codes* and *Pandects*, *Statutes* and *Reports*. But in a *Tun* of Law there was not one *Grain* of Justice; he left this in Town, together with his Ears to save Expences, to insinuate, that People should not wonder if he was Deaf to the Complaints of Widows and Orphans, seeing he had lost the Faculty of Hearing.

He found the good People in a neighbourly Correspondence employed in Tillage; they had no leisure to think of Fewds, nor mind to start Quarrels; they carried on their own Business without entering into the concern of others, and enjoy'd their own without the troublesome Thoughts of Fear or Envy. No sooner was he settled among them, but the Scene changed. These Boors began to talk of *Law* and *Encroachments*; of *Forfeitures* and *Seizures*; so that the Disease that raged in *Hudibras* Days seized upon the Clowns of *Middlesex* and *Surrey*.

*When civil Dungeon first grew high,
And Men fell out they knew not why:
When hard Words, Jealousies, and Fears,
Set Folks together by the Ears.*

The Furies seemed to have left Hell to haunt the World, and forsaken the damned to plague the living. They transplanted the Gibberish of *Westminster-Hall* into the Country. *Tom* and *Dick* laid down their *How goes the Market*, to talk of *Statutes*, *Precedents*, *Reports*, *Writs*, *Error*, *Reverse of Judgment*, &c. One would have thought

thought the Jargon of the Bar had out-lawed the Tongue of the Country ; and some that the *French* King ship'd for *England* his *Norman* Language, to open a Passage for his Arms. There was Action upon Action : The Son sued the Father for an Allowance : The Wife set upon the Husband for a separate Maintenance : One Mortgaged his Tenament to recover Damages ; another pleaded away 100*l. per Annum*, to chop at Five ; and in the end People bought Law, and *Philargyrus* swept away all their Money ; so that he out-ran the very Lawyer in the Fable ; for this only supped the Oyster, but our Attorney pocketed the very Shell into the Bargain : He slipt into their Livings, when he had privateer'd upon their Purse. For even those who gain'd the Suit, lost their Capital, to quit his Bill of Charge.

It's strange a Christian could intend such Mischief, and yet more, that one Pettifogger could act it. But the Truth is, the Lawyer was too hard for the Christian ; the Profession got the better of Religion. Besides, though his Forehead was double Gilt with Brass, his Tongue was steeped in Oil ; he was Master of his Words, and what is more, of his Conscience ; a Flatterer in *Folio*, and no Man better skill'd in the Art of moving the Passions ; he could transmute Phlegm into Choler ; and then by a turn of the Tongue, harangue down the Hurrican into a Calm. He had a hundred Precedents at a dead list, and could throw over a bad Cause, all the Varnish of a good one : In a Word, he was an errand Lawyer (*id est*) all Paint, all Plaister ; Honest without, and Knave within.

Your Cause is good, (said he to William,) *give me my Fee, and I'll defend it*. Now the poor Fellow had no more Right, than to the Empire of *China*. At the Trial a Verdict passes against him. *Where are we now*, Mr. Attorney, cries William ? *My Fee*, (answers *Philargyrus*) *I'll move the Court in Arrest of Judgment*. But Sentence is confirm'd, and Will's Hopes sink with his Purse. *We are lost*, (says the poor Man.) *Not yet*, answers Mr. Attorney, *my Fee, and I'll bring a Writ of Error*. But here again Judgment is confirmed, and Will's condemn'd to Costs and Charges. *What now*, good Sir ! (says William, with a doleful Accent,) *There is no more to be said*, (replies Master Attorney, with a Shrug,) *Pay the Knave his Money, and I am satisfied*.

*So Lawyers, lest the Bear Defendant,
And Plaintiff Dog should make an end on't ;
Do slave and toil with Writs of Error,
Reverse of Judgments and Demurrer,
To let 'em breath a while, and then
Hoop, and so set 'em on again.*

The Defendant went away with one part of Wills Livelihood, the Attorney with the other; so that the Law stript him to the Skin, and turned him on the Parish without Support, (and what is worse) without Pity. The poor Man complain'd he was beggar'd by the Law; but he misplaced his Misfortune, and laid it at the wrong Door. For as a Mass of peccant Humours makes indeed a Man Sick, and the Physician kills him; so Avarice and Contention embroil an Estate, but the Lawyers ruin it; and as no Man dies of a Fever, Plague, &c. but of the Doctor: As no Man is deprived of his living by the Law, but the Lawyer.

However, Experience has an excellent knack at instructing; it polishes the most unhew'd Understanding, and instills Wisdom into Fools: It often, indeed, raises upon its Chapmen at Discretion, and rates Prudence above the common Standard of the Market. Notwithstanding the Ware keeps some Proportion with the Price, and its Goodness atones for the Dearness. The good People were now satisfied, Attornies give not their labours *Gratis*; that they compose Differences, as the Wolf parted the Dogs in the Fable, by devouring the Contenders; and they concluded, that beggary from the hands of an Attorney was worse complexioned, than from those of a Neighbour; that their Tongues were as infectious as the Teeth of a Crocodile, *Quod dentibus laceravit nunquam sanatur*; with this only Difference, that this Serpent bites to Death, and those sooth, fawn, and flatter into Poverty and Indigency.

They resolv'd therefore to compose their Differences, rather *a l' amiable* than at the Bar, and stand to the Arbitration of *Eusebius*, than to lay their Concerns at the Mercy of *Philargyrus*; his Vertue gave in Security for his Uprightness, and his Abilities qualified him for the Post of an Umpire; so that they were sure his Sentence would not clash with his Judgment, nor probably with Justice.

He knew a Beatitude is the Reward of a Peace-maker, and embraced the Trouble of this charitable Undertaking, to Purchase the Vertue. For why (says he) shall Charity be less courageous than Interest? Or Court ease more than Avarice? If Men put themselves on the Wheel for Money in Hand, and Hell in Reversion; if they rack their Brain, and torture Conscience, to fence against Poverty, or to rear up a petty Fortune upon the Ruins of Honour and Humanity, why shall Christians upon an Apprehension of Trouble, decline a Duty that is noble and generous, pleasing to God, and glorious in the very Estimate of Men?

His House was always open to the Neighbourhood, and he was always at Leisure to hear their Grievances, and ready to Redress them; his Abode was easy and inviting; his Behaviour without Stiffness or Formality; for he thought to be great was not to be starch'd and supercilious; as he acted without Interest, so he pronounced without Favour; he regarded the Cause without taking any Notice of the Person: Noise could not byass him, nor Numbers fright him, nor Interest draw him into an Injustice; he durst appear for injured Right, notwithstanding the Authority of the Opposer, and he equally scorned to trample upon a Beggar, and to sneak to a Prince; and all were so prepossess'd with the Opinion of his Integrity, that even those who lost the Suit, rather blamed their Title, than his Judgment.

In the mean time *Philargyrus* was without Business; his Trade flagg'd, Customs fell off, and his Rents came in but slowly; those Streams that fed his Pockets were jammed up, or run in another Channel; so that his good Fortune was at a stand: Lucre ebb'd, and Curses flowed in upon him; he raged at his Disappointment, and poured out a Tun of Gall upon *Eusebius*, the last Retreat of Anger and Malice. For few People are unskilful at those Weapons; and he that cannot stab an enemy with his Tongue, is fallen some Degrees below the State of Impotence.

Resolutions altered with his Passion, like Waves in a tempest, one rowled upon the back of another. Sometimes he was for preferring an *Action* against him, for practising the Law without Licence; then for representing him to the Government as a disaffected Person, a

Jacobite in Faction, and a Fanatick in Religion. But *Eusebius* laugh'd at his Threats, and pitied his Malice. He pitch'd at last upon a personal Conference, as the most effectual and less expensive way to come to Terms of Accommodation. And for this reason he invited himself to Dinner. *Eusebius* was glad of the Occasion; he had no less a desire to discourse with *Philargyrus*, than *Philargyrus* with him. The Lawyer had a mind to draw up his Grievances against the Gentleman, and the Gentleman to catechize the Lawyer; so that both Parties being eager to sound the Charge, what wonder they closed, and soon came to a hot Engagement?

DIALOGUE III.

The Abuses of some Lawyers laid open; and Precepts given how to discharge their Duty like Christians.

Eusebius perceiv'd at Table *Philargyrus* had a better Stomach to complain, than to eat; to fall upon his Host, than his Dinner: For when Passion rises, Hunger falls, and Appetite sinks when Gall overflows. However *Eusebius* thought the Lawyer's Soweriness was no Precedent for Rudeness; that one Mans failure in Civility could be no Justification of anothers; but after Dinner he took him into the Garden, that he might throw up the Oil that oppress'd his Stomach, and almost stop'd Respiration. *Philargyrus* took hold of the Occasion, and thus address'd himself to *Eusebius*.

Philargyrus. I have often heard of your Piety and Wisdom, but how can I reconcile your Conduct to either? Be not displeas'd if I defer more to my own Knowledge than to fame; *that* cannot deceive, *this* is imposing. It's but Intelligence at second hand, liable to Error in its Rise, and to Misrepresentation in the Conveyance. Pray, Sir, where is Prudence, when you embark in every Man's Affair, and draw into your *Forum* all the Feud of the Hundred? You have adjourned the Courts of *Westminster-Hall* into your private Family; and pronounce more Sentences from an arm'd Chair, than the Lord Chief Justice from the Bench. A Man must have a low esteem of ease to resign it for Trouble, without Necessity

cessity, Profit, or even Invitation; and a mean Judgment to prostitute it to the Caprice of a mercurial and restless Temper.

But besides, Sir, I suppose you veil your Indiscretion under the cover of Charity, and disguise and unquiet Humour with the Mask of a Vertue. But you should consider your Charity stands upon slippery Ground, and may sink into Injustice before you are aware. For right and wrong are measured by the Law; by this tenure we hold our Lands, and our Lives, and all Title must stand or fall by the Constitution of the Government. Now the knowledge of the Law comes not unto us by Inspiration, nor is acquir'd by the sole Dictates of Nature. For the Rules of Justice are so unlike in one Meridian to those in another, that one would think Men's Species varied with the Climate, or the Elevation had a transmuting Quality, and could throw things out of one Nature into another; that the civil Magistrate minted Vertue and Vice, which like Coin pass'd current only in his own Dominions. You must not therefore only read the *Magna Charta* of Nature, but must plod over *Reports* and *Statutes*, *Glosses* and *Comments*, thumb *Codes* and *Pandeets*, and wander through all the Labyrinths of *Custom* and *Precedent*. This is a tedious Journey, and I fancy you have not been either at the Charges or Trouble of it. No, the Law is to you *Terra incognita*, an unknown Region. You understand the Language of the Bar, no more than that of the great *Cham*. How therefore will you come at the Sense, and square a Judgment by the Rules of Justice and Equity? I fear, good Sir, you kill some with Kindness, and pack others into Alms-houses, or quarter them upon the Parish out of Charity, who notwithstanding might have liv'd comfortably upon their own Fund, without being a burthen to themselves, or incumbrance to their Neighbour. Whilst you wrong others by giving 'em right when they have only a Title to Poverty, and the Revenues of the Basket. I am willing to allow you to pronounce according to Conscience; but alas, Conscience without Law, is at best but an innocent Mistake; and though it exempts from Punishment in the next World, it exposes your Neighbour to Beggary in this. So that, though perchance it may be no Crime, its a very real Injustice. Why don't you set up for a Doctor

of the Faculty, as well as for a Gentleman of the *Inns of Court*, and post your *Recipes* about the Country, as well as your *Verdicts*? Is it less charitable to set a dying Man upon his Legs, than an expiring Title? To cure a broken Arm, than a disjointed Estate? You are sensible, I suppose, you are unqualified for the Employment; that you may send Poison for a Remedy, and Arsenick in place of a Cordial. But, pray Sir, does not your Charity throw you into the same Danger? You are as great a Stranger to the Law, as to the *Dispensatory*: And as slenderly read in *Cook* upon *Littleton*, as in *Galen* or *Hippocrates*. Now therefore can you distinguish between Right and Wrong? The Law is the sole Standard of both; and even this is not so manifest as to flash Evidence and Conviction. The Sense sticks not on the Surface, nor perches upon the top of the Letter; it must be often drawn out by Illation and Precedent; it's a Mystery, nothing but Study and Practice can unriddle; withdraw therefore from Business, and let Controversies run in their ordinary Channel: And remember Charity is preposterous, when it persuades a good Action, by doing an ill one.

The Gentleman express'd himself with Heat and Emphasis, with more Passion than Reason, and sometimes transgress'd the common Rules of Decency and Breeding; but he pleaded his own Cause, and so we must fling in some Grains of Allowance; for the most lazy Tongue, when kick'd by Interest, and spurr'd on by Passion, will run Post, and stumble in the hurry over Modesty and Behaviour. *Eusebius* saw he run too fast to continue the Career; that when he had shot all his Ammunition, he might be attack'd at greater Advantages; and that probably when Passion was talk'd down, Reason might get the Ascendant. He therefore heard his Harangue, without Commotion or Interposing; and when *Philargyrus* had ended his Invective, *Eusebius* began his Justification.

Eusebius. I perceive that the *Temple* and *Gray's-Inn* have declar'd me a publick Enemy to the *Hogben Moghen*, *Learned in the Law*; a Traytor to the Prince, and a Betrayer of the Liberty and Property of the Subject. In fine, guilty of all Crimes by Implications, though of none in Reality. You have drawn your Tongue in the Cause; you appear the first in the Field with your *Quota*, to prevent

prevent the Invasion, and all the dire Consequences of my Attempt upon the Bar and the Bench. But your Preparations for War are no less unseasonable than expensive; for I am resolv'd to entertain a Friendly Correspondence with your Corporation, and neither provoke nor trust you. You are dangerous both Ways; your Friendship is as Fatal as your Anger; and he who confides in your Fidelity, receives more Wounds, than he who deserves your Resentment. However, Sir, you do well to keep the *longa roba* Militia in Discipline; to skirmish in Jest, before you engage in Earnest.

You would certainly be too blame did you rate my Qualities by the Report of Fame, for she speaks at random, and pronounces without Judgment or Sincerity: She claps Vices upon good Men, and Vertues upon Rascals: She lampoons or praises at a venture, and adapts Satyr or Panegyrick to the Exigence of Interest, and the Byass of Faction, as you stand off in Caution and Reserve for fear of a Surprize. I'll follow the same Method, for did I take the Size of your Morals and Religion by the publick Cry, I should conclude you had a slender Provision of Conscience, and none of Honour or Honesty.

I. You question my Prudence for intruding my self into Business without Necessity or Invitation, and I your Religion for the Censure. If Wisdom persuade me to Christianity, why do I forfeit it by discharging the Duties of my Profession? Now, you know, Christ commands me, not only to extend my Love to Friends, (which is at most a *Pagan* or *Jewish* Vertue,) but to my Enemies; I must return Good for Evil, and Favours for Affronts. I must cloath the Naked, and drop my Alms into the Hands of the Indigent. I must reconcile Enemies, and bring Neighbours to a good Understanding; and Christ pays the Labour with a Beatitude, *Blessed are the Peacemakers*. Certainly, this earnest of Heaven, balances the Labour; and who engages in Business upon such a Promise, gives not his Pains *Gratis*. Interest therefore and Duty invite me to Business, viz. the Precepts of Religion, and the Hope of Heaven, grounded upon the Promises of our Redeemer; and these are my Commissions too; so that my Conduct is neither Illegal nor Foolish: For, I suppose, a Man who has Christ's Command, is armed with an unexceptionable Authority; and that the
broad

broad Seal of Heaven, is as Authentick as that of the Realm.

2. You are not satisfied of my Capacity, because I am a Stranger to the Laws. Perchance, Sir, I am more familiarly acquainted with them, than you suspect. I was always of Opinion, a smack of the Law was no less necessary to manage an Estate, than to acquire one; and that a Man to avoid Circumvention, must dive into all the little Artifices of the Bar, and the Mystery of pleading; for whoever looks down a Precipice is within an Ace of a Fall; and when the Snare lies out of sight, it's beyond the Power of Forecast to avoid it; for this reason I have turned over the Law, and methinks it has something of the Prophet *Ezekiel's* River, in which a Lamb might walk, and an Elephant sink; a Man who means well, may easily fall upon the Sense; and who intends to play the Knave, may find a cover for his Forgeries.

But after all, an ordinary Pittance of Law, with a good Conscience, rids more Suits than the Science of *Cook* with a bad one. Indeed, a Man beaten to the Trade, may wrangle and harangue better than one that is unexperienced in the Science of *Chicane*; he may talk more plausibly, and embroider his Discourse with Statutes and Precedents.

But generally this is only flourish Terms, and *Westminster* Cant; it raises a Dust, flings a glitter on a bad Cause, and a gloom over a good one: It racks the Law and Reason too: It raises Doubts, wire-draws Suits in *infinitum*, and makes Demonstration it self as two handled as the Pagan Oracles. Whereas, would Men as studiously employ their time to discover Truth, as to overlook it; to end Debates as to perpetuate them; Sentences would be more Quick, and perchance more Just; at least the Subject would seldom plead away his whole Estate, to maintain a Part, or find Justice more expensive than Extortion, and more barbarous than Violence: Nor, in fine, lose the Substance to chop at a Shadow.

I claim not the Prerogative of Infallibility, like my Neighbours, I am liable to Mistakes, and subject to Error; the Features of Wrong have often such a Resemblance with those of *Right*, that there is no distinguishing the one from the other; and therefore I never pretend

my Judgment (like the Laws of the *Medes* and *Persians*) as irrevokable; those who are dissatisfied may appeal to higher Powers, and shelter themselves and their concerns under the Protection of the Law. But, Sir, they have found by Experience, the Expedient is dangerous and chargeable; that those who raise Suits, are not proper to end them; and that few engage in the Law, without Wounds in the Skirmish, and those mortal too: Nay, and by a strange Sympathy, they are entailed on the Family; and descend (like Chronical Distempers) to their Posterity.

Philargyrus. So; here is a Satyr upon the Profession, and all that practice it are Cheats and Impostors, at least by Construction; the words will bear an Action; and did I not respect your Person, I might bring you upon your Knees, and penance your Indiscretion.

Eusebius. You misunderstand me, and throw a guilty Comment upon an innocent Text. No Man has a greater Value for the Profession than my self; it's the very Basis of Government, the support of Society and Commerce; it's a Science that stops not at airy Notions, nor sleeps in Speculation and Revery; it sets Hand to Work, puts Bounds to *Right* and *Wrong*, protects the Clown from Slavery, and the Nobility from the violent Encroachments of the Multitude. It's as necessary for the Conservation of Order, as Air for that of Life. Without it, the greatest Empires must fall into a Heap of Confusion, and the World become a Retreat to Thieves and Assassines. Power will determine Right, and Force justify Extortion and Violence; a long Sword will be Title, and Force will put in Possession.

As the Profession is commendable, so Thousands of its Professors have been not only above Praise, but even above Calumny: Flattery could not fawn them into an ill Action, nor Menaces fright them from a good one; they were Just in spite of Interest, and Upright in spite of Temptation; they bore up against the Provocations of Greatness and Favour; they durst defend Justice under the Disguise of a Beggar, and prosecute Injustice, tho' protected by Title and Authority.

Who has not heard of the great *Boetius*? His Probity out-shined his noble Extraction; his Justice gave a lustre to the Scarlet, and his Prudence dignified the very Dignity

nity he possess'd ; he had the Privilege to revive all Learning, and at his Death to bury the whole *Roman Grandeur* in his own Tomb ; more glorious in his Disgrace, than in the very Meridian of his Fortune, and more happy in his Misery, than at the top of his Prosperity. This brave Man was above Discouragement and ill Usage, and not so much as check'd into indifferency by Injury, or caressed ; he declared for Truth against Majesty, and declaimed against Oppression in the Face of Tyranny.

Who can sufficiently praise the incomparable Sir *Thomas More*, the Glory of our Nation, and the Phoenix of his Age : He was the most able Lawyer of his Time, and what is more, the best Man : His Vertue out-stretch'd his Knowledge, and his Constancy was too hard for Cruelty ; he mounted from the Bar to the Bench, and carried on Vertue through all the Opposition of Avarice ; the Charms of his Honesty were irresistible ; they both conquered Prejudice, and captivated Envy it self ; and tho' he lost his Life on a Scaffold, he went off with Fidelity. For what could King *Harry* condemn but Vertue ? Or who could he pronounce Guilty, but the Innocent ? A Disgrace from him was more honourable, than a Patent of Peerage, and to be strip'd of a Dukedom, than to receive one.

Tho' the Interest of Vertue is almost sunk in our degenerate Age ; tho' Conscience and Regularity have small Footing among us ; yet I could single out some Gentlemen of the Law, whose Honesty vies with the most upright Examples of Antiquity, as well as their Science ; and if the Ancients have any Advantage, it's only that they are Originals, and our Moderns Copyists : These are Men that neither bend to Favour, nor bow to Interest ; that prosecute Injustice in Power, and abet Justice under all the Disadvantages of Poverty and Confinement : They mind not the Plaintiff, but the Cause ; and rather stand for *Right* without Fee, than side with *Wrong* for the double.

Yet, I confess, the irregular Conduct of some, has thrown a Scandal on the very Profession ; and the Probity of many suffers in the Opinion of the World, for the mean Artifices of a few ; but what wonder if some Children of wicked *Cain*, mingle their Blood, and their Practice, with the Race of *Seth* ? A Lawyer and a Cheat are
now

now Terms almost Synonymous ; and Men that thrive by the Law, are supposed to live without any. But it's unjust to stigmatize a whole Body, for the Failures of some Members ; the Punishment and the Fault should go together, and he alone should bear the Reproach of a bad Action, that had the Face and Pleasure of committing it. These are Men of low Fortunes, and profligate Manners, unable to rise by Merit ; they turn off to over-reaching, and supply the want of Worth, by Tricks and Artifices. Such (we say) rise by their Wits ; but it's a Mistake, they live by the Prostitution of Conscience, and Sale of Probity ; here, Sir, you have my Sense of the Matter ; and if you please to Action me, take your Course.

Philargyrus. I perceive you will not have Men exert their Parts, nor employ their Talents for Lucre and Gain. No, they must rust in a Corner, or be lock'd up in a Closet ; they must be laid out in the publick Service, or spent in Charities ; and if a Lawyer practises not to a Letter the Doctrine of Self-abnegation, if he casts an Eye on his own Interest, as well as on his Neighbours ; or has the Foresight to lay in a Provision for Age and Accident, he must be dubb'd a Cheat, and posted up for a Fourb and Impostor. I confess I am not so disingaged from all Temporal Concerns, as quite to overlook them. I will oblige my Neighbour, but then I will not disoblige my Reason ; I will furnish out Life to the best Advantage. A Man may live by the Sweat of his Brains, as well as by the Work of his Hands, and balance the Expence of his Studies, with the Fruits of his Practice. In fine, Sir, I will mind my Client's Interest, but intend not to forget my own ; he shall have Law, but must return Money for the Barter.

Ensebius. Nay, I conceive, a Lawyer that drudges *gratis*, will be overlaid with Custom, though scant of Money ; and if he sets out with a low Fortune, he will not fall upon a higher in his Journey, for as the World goes, Generosity and good Nature are no thriving Embellishments ; and when one leaves the Payment of an Obligation to the Discretion of the Receiver, the acknowledgment seldom rises in Proportion of the Favour. But you misconceive my Meaning : I am not for throwing all the Labour upon the Lawyer, and all the Profit upon the

the Client. No, let him keep within the Bounds of Honesty, and I have no Exceptions against him ; a Setter of *Meum* and *Tuum* deserves a Salary, as well as a Setter of Bones : But as I would not have a Surgeon make Wounds for the Gain of curing 'em ; nor a Doctor poison a Patient to force upon him an Amulet ; so a Gentleman of the Bar should not set People together by the Ears, to be paid for the parting them.

Philargyrus. That is, when two commence a Suit, we must compose the difference *a l' amiable*, and rather run to Arbitration than the Law. Indeed our Trade would go on at a strange rate were Umpires in Fashion, *Cargo* would not pay the Voyage.

Eusebius. Suppose such a Project were put in Execution, where is the Harm ? Tho' you might need less Law, you would practice more Gospel ; and if the Lawyer lost, the Christian would gain by the Expedient. Your Vails might be slender, however they would be just ; and I think a Crown with Innocence, is more valuable than a Pound with a Crime ; but besides, you would still find Fools enough to impose upon, for the World is stock'd with *Neck or Nothing* ; with Men that will make over by Retail an Estate of a Thousand Pound *per Annum*, to a Lawyer, in Expectation of being pleaded into another of two Hundred.

Philargyrus. You will have us keep within the Bounds of Justice, you caution us against Injustice, explain the Jargon ; for I fear our Notions disagree, and that my Idea is more indulgent, and of greater Latitude than yours. I believe, according to your Scheme, a Man must make the least of his Parts to be Honest, and play the good natur'd Fool to be a Saint in your Calendar : But to be free with you, I intend to sell my Pains by Inch of Candle. I'll not venture one single Pulse but upon good Security, and high Interest ; and if I can get Ten in the Hundred, Why shall I refuse the Offer ? Injustice is a Chymæra when both sides agree. Able Lawyers are now as scarce as Corn was the last Year : Why then shall they not tax their Labour at Discretion, and raise the Market as well as Farmers ?

Eusebius. I fear indeed our Notions of Justice are as wide as our Practice ; Lawyers are no strait-lac'd Casuists in their own Concerns ; they steer by the old Philosophi-

cal Principle, *Nothing is unjust that is profitable.* But tho' these Maxims have Practice for their Warrant, they have neither Reason nor the Gospel; and without this Support, the most establish'd Custom is only Vice triumphant. Now, if you please, I will deliver my Judgment upon the Matter.

1.

It's certain Law-suits are warrantable merely by Accident: Two cannot have Right to the same thing; but because the Title is uncertain, the contending Parties may appeal to the Law, and must acquiesce to the Judgment of the Court.

2.

Hence it's clear, when Right stands evidently for one side, a Lawyer cannot plead for the other; if he does, he stands no less guilty of Injustice, than if he help a Pad to take a Purse upon the High-way. Indeed his Crime appears more genteel in the Eyes of Men, but in the sight of God it's ten Times more monstrous; for he abuses a Vertue, to practice a Vice; and endeavours to ruin Innocence by the Law, that was Enacted to protect it; he turns the Sanctuary into a Butchery, and stabs Justice at the Foot of her own Altar.

3.

When solid Reasons support both Sides, Right lies in the Dark, and therefore you may plead for either, but not for both? For which Party soever has Right, you are sure to be in the Wrong: Two can have no Title, *in solidum*, to the same thing. Indeed, to take with both Hands is a present Remedy against an empty Pocket, but a Poison to the Conscience: For double Fees oppress the Stomach; nor is there any Cure but a Vomit, (*id est*) Restitution. Such Men are Nufances to Society; and for my part I am of the Satyr's Opinion in the Fable, that it's dangerous to trust one *that blows hot and cold*; nor would I have any more to do with him, than with an *Italian Bravo*, who will dispatch my Enemy for a Crown, and my self for a Couple. Those old *Israelites* that halted between *Bell* and the True God, were neither staunch *Jews*, nor through-pac'd *Gentiles*, but a Compound of two Species united in one Monster. What are our *Jack-of-both-side* Gentlemen, but an Off-spring of the same Race? They plead for Justice on the one
side

side of the Mouth, and against it on the other; protect it, and prosecute it in the same Moment, and so cheat both Clients and themselves into the Bargain: Whosoever buys either Wealth or Honour at the Price of a Crime, over-purchases. Tell me not, *There must be no interfering between Business and Religion, that if the Pulpit will not agree with the Bar, we must thrive in the World, and make the most of Labour.* I am apt to believe those unchristian Principles, have made the very Laws a greater Grievance, than those that break them; that they have heaved some into fair Livings, and others out of them; and that they permit not Conscience to grow too hard for Interest: But, however, Sir, if the Bar be at variance with the Bible, whatever you gain in hand, will bear no Proportion with what you must expect in Reversion. For I cannot think that he makes the most of his Parts, who writes and pleads himself into Ten Thousand Pounds *per Annum*, for some Years, and into unconceivable Torments for an Eternity. But you must thrive in the World! In God's Name, provided the means be handsome, neither unjust before God, nor scandalous in the sight of Men; but let me tell you, he who resolves to rise is already within an Ace of being a Cheat; it's ten to one he never formalizes upon the Means; when Covetousness has got the Reins, there is no holding it in with Notions.

4.

You must not draw out Law-suits in *Sæcula Sæculorum*, nor stretch them in Lengths, till a poor Client loses both Patience and Money; this is to join Murder to Robbery; to take a Man's Purse with one Hand, and his Life with the other; it's a Medley of Cruelty and Injustice; first put me upon the Rack, between Hope and Fear, and then force me to pay the Executioner for my Torment. A Suit now runs for Life, and oftentimes descends down to the fourth Generation. So that the Law is a Labyrinth; when once you are engaged there is no Retreat; if you are strait handed, the Lawyer becomes *Resty*, he will not stir, and like an *ignis fatuus* he leaves you in the Mire; if you see him high, and rain down upon him plentiful Showers of Guineas, he spins out the Cause to drain your Pocket; so that he either does too much, or too little, and perpetuates Disputes no less by being too well

well fee'd, than ill: Every one complains of the Grievance; however, it goes on, and like to continue till our Benchers have either *quietus est*, and *More's* Utopian Gentlemen are call'd to the *Bar*, and the *Bench*, in their leather Breeches.

5.

There must be no cross-biting Evidences, nor frightening; no laughing, no questioning them out of Truth and their Senses; to baffle a true Evidence is no less unjust, than to countenance Perjury. This is reported to have been said at the Bar, but by no means on the Bench. *Well, good Man leather Breeches* (said once a grave Judge from the Bench) *what have you for Swearing?* He supposed a Peal of Laughter might dismount the Clown, ruffle his Memory, and make him trip in his Disposition; but he mistook his Man, and met with his Match; the Fellow was too sturdy to be scared by Furs or Scarlet; or to flinch for a Sarcasm. *My Lord, had you no more for Lying* (replied he) *than I for Swearing, you might have wore leather Breeches, still.* Now a Man, who upon so solemn an Occasion dares affront a legal Witness, will certainly at a Dead-lift suborn a false one; and though his Design miscarried, his Malice was at full Swarth. I know we are pleased to call this unhandsome dealing with, but Names make no Alteration in Things. The Scripture terms it cheating, and we must rather appeal to its Verdict, than to Custom, or *Calapine*. *Quevedo* tells us, that at the Sound of the Trumpet to Judgment, an Attorney would have demurr'd, upon pretence he had got a Soul was none of his own, and that his Body and Soul were not Fellows. I believe some Lawyers will have more Conscience in the next World, than they have in this; and at the Day of Account wish that they had made over their Souls to their Legatees, as well as their Estates; but they'll not dare to pretend their Souls and Bodies are not Fellows; for alas, they have gone halves in the Crime, as well as the Pleasure and Profit, and by consequence must share in the Punishment.

A Man that will thrive, easily slides into an Injustice; but then it's almost as hard to recover, as to return from Hell: For Injustice seems to be one of those Crimes that are neither forgiven in this World, nor in the next. Indeed a Man may repent, but the Conditions are so hard,

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so mortifying, that not one of a Thousand will sign them. For, in fine, an Injustice is not pardoned without a full Restitution, and Reparation of Damages; and these run often as high as the Lawyer's Gains; notwithstanding, tho' you have raked together Ten Thousand Pounds *per Annum*, by defending unjust Suits, and stretching out just ones; by baffling true Evidences, or bribing Knights of the Post, you must disgorge and fall into your own first Poverty, as naked of Support as when you first set out. Now, is it not against the Grain to expose your Reputation to censure and obloquy, to shrink in your Figure, and to sink into nothing? However, these bitter Pills must down, unless you can resolve to welter in Fire and Brimstone Eternally. It's hard, I confess, to sling up a fair Estate; yet better, than to sling up all Title to Heaven, and to entail upon you God's Curse in this World, and his Vengeance in the other.

No Man in his Wits would purchase an Estate for his Child at the Expence of his Life; why then will he at the Price of his Soul? Is this so contemptible, and that of so superlative a Value? One must have a faint Idea of future Punishments and Rewards, thus to misplace his Judgment and Esteem; he must suppose his Soul vanishes into nothing, when his Body falls into Dust; that the River of *Phlegeton* is as real and tormenting as the Lake of Brimstone, and that the Pains of the Devils and Damned, as Romantick, as those of *Tityus* and *Sisyphus*: In fine, at most, that Heaven is no more pleasing than *Spring-Garden*, nor Hell no more tormenting than *Newgate* or the *Counter*.

Now the best method to avoid this Difficulty is to avoid the Sin; it's ten times more easy to abstain from Rapine, than to repent of it. It's not hard to keep within the bounds of Justice, if Avarice get not the Ascendant; but if this Vice runs away with our Heart, we stop at nothing. Strong Desires are strong Temptations to use ill Means; in the Hurry of Passion, Conscience is seldom heard; he that is bent upon a thing, will have it right or wrong.

Nor will this Reservedness baulk your Fortune: A Lawyer that has the Reputation of an honest Man, will always find Employment. For who will not rather put his Concerns in the Hands of one who makes a Conscience

ence of over-reaching a Client, than lay himself at the Mercy of a Knave? Honesty is esteemed by all, tho' few go to the Price of the Purchase, and even those who practise it the least, are most eager Pretenders to it. Indeed your Fortune will not rise so fast, but then the Edifice will be more firm and lasting: Those Buildings that rise on a sudden, fall in a Moment; like precipitated Births, they are never long-lived, and generally bury the Builder under the Ruins. Gain never relishes better than when it's just, and Advantage is almost doubled by being lawful. Pray, Sir, be not displeased at my Freedom; such plain Dealing is necessary to recover Justice, and disarm its Enemy. I expose the Practice to reform the Man. I may perchance draw upon me the Anger of some guilty Benchers, and expose my Person to Calumny and Discountenance; but I shall only pity their Blindness, and despise their Malice; for fear not to cross upon a Vice tho' never so prevailing, nor to oppose a Grievance tho' back'd by Number, and supported by Prescription. I will please no Man to his Disadvantage, nor fix him in an Error by a Complement, nor caress him out of his Duty and Happiness.

Philargyrus stood upon Thorns, and heard the Discourse with a thousand Grimaces; he was Proof to homely and good Counsel, by a kind of *Antiperistasis*, hardened in ill; you might as well have preach'd an *Ethiopian* into a *White*, as this Attorney into an honest Christian. Ill Habits hung not loose upon him, but twisted themselves with his Nature; they sunk into his very Soul, and debauch'd him in Practice and Principle too.

Look ye, Sir, (said he to *Eusebius*) you have regaled me with Cant, with Flourishes, and a Glut of Casuistry: but I will not be beaten out of my Road by hard Words, University-jargon, and strain'd Speculations. I live by the Law, not by Casuistry; and that stands upon Precedent, not Reason: How many brave Gentlemen have beat great Estates out of the Law, by the Force of Merit and Industry, and plead Coronets on their Coaches, and themselves into the House of Peers! They work'd on the same Materials, I do; steered by the same Compass, and were governed by the same Principle: Yet, where are these Restitutions! Believe me, Sir, your Doctrine is not calculated for our Elevation or Age. Prescription

runs against such out-dated Practices, and that is Law; A Man that will part with an Estate, deserves none; and he that returns a *Lordship* out of Tendernefs of Conscience, resigns his Wits in the Bargain. Pray let us not interfere; keep your Estate, and suffer me to glean up a handsome Livelihood. Conscience will not interpose between Me and Profit; Wealth brings Ease, and Poverty hangs a Man upon the Tenters.

When *Philargyrus* was gone, *Eusebius* returned to himself; the parting Complement of the Lawyer had almost scared him into a Trance: He was at a stand to determine whether he was above-ground or under, in Hell among the Damned, or in *England* among the Living. Such Stroaks of Libertinism sat on every Tittle of his Discourse; such Sallies of Atheism, that one would have thought the Man had trick'd himself not only out of Religion, but out of human Nature; there was no start of Passion, no sudden surprize to discompose him, he spoke under cool Blood, under Thought and Reflection; all these Circumstances inflame the Guilt, and swell the Reckoning: This Fair-well damp'd *Eusebius*, and brought into his Mind those uncomfortable Words of our Blessed Saviour, *Many are called, but few are chosen*. To what height of Madnefs (said *Eusebius*) does Avarice push Men, when once it has got the Mastery of Conscience? To pawn ones Soul for a Fee, and Heaven for a double one: Is it not Frensy to Excess? And Lunacy beyond Expression? All the Mad-houses in the Nation are unable to furnish such Instances of Folly; such Strains of Distraction and Stupidity. Did Men believe no future State, I conceive they might make the most of this; they might forage upon their Neighbour's Land, and cruize upon their Purfes, and store their Magazines with Plunder and Rapine. But to believe the Doctrine of Christ, and to act by that of *Hobbs*; to own a Hell, and sweat to feel it, is extraordinary and surprising. *Let my Soul be rather with the old Philosophers*, than with those of our modern Lawyers; perchance they might have had less Faith, but I am sure they had more Honesty; and if their Religion was worse, their Practice was better.

DIALOGUE IV.

How EUSEBIUS behaved himself towards his Neighbours.

THOUGH *Eusebius* lived in Retreat, he had not forsworn Company, nor disbanded from Society. Piety is neither sullen nor solitary; it cares not indeed to be crowded with Visitors, nor always to be tied up to Ceremonies, to be pestered with Flies, nor tormented with Flatterers; yet it's never behind-hand in paying those duties Civility requires, and Decency calls for: He lived in a neighbourly Correspondence with all the Gentry, and received and returned both Visits and Invitations: His Temper was too serious to be affected by the younger Fry, that place Mirth in Noise, and Diversion in Extravagances; that measure a Welcome not by the Bottle, but the Gallon; and suppose they are not treated like Men, unless they are drunk down to the Beast; but if those Sparks had small Inclination to his Company, he had less to theirs, and rather kept his Time and Liberty to himself, than fling them away upon such insignificant Trifles; he neither could mend their Morals, nor endure their Follies; however, he distinguished their Quality from their Vices; and though upon Occasions he lash'd *these*, he always treated their Persons with regard. Nay, he so timed his Reprehensions, that they rather seemed to fall in by Hazard, than designing; and though he spoke in Jest, he instructed in Earnest. In fine, he rather glanced at their Faults by short *Innuendo's*, than attack'd them in Form, and endeavoured to raise a Blush, not their Anger; for he knew that Choler cramps Reason, and when this flies off the Hinges, a Man is no more fit to receive good Counsel, than a Tempest.

For this Reason he used to say, Prodigals must rather be reclaimed by Surprize than Force, by Kindness than Reproach: They will follow, but not drive; they endure a Remedy if applied with a genteel Hand, but then they wince if you gall them; like that of Children, their Physick must be palatable; the Pills will not down, unless they are gilt; he therefore disapproved those hot-headed Zealots, who give Vice no tolerable Quarter;

they treat it with the same Freedom in Scarlet, as in Linsey-woolsey, and catechise a Lord with no more Ceremony, than a Peasant, but they take false Measures; great Men must be complimented into their Duty, as well as out of it. Civility works more kindly upon 'em, than Rudeness.

Though the young Sparks kept aloof from *Eusebius*, the more sober coveted his Acquaintance; he was grave, yet he had nothing starch'd, nothing stiff; his Conversation was easy, and he always modelled his Discourse to the Time and Company; he hated those old Fops, who press for Submission upon the Younger, with a stately Mein and reserved Air; and suppose Age and Grey-hairs give them a just Title to Respect. This is (said he) to tax Conversation, and to put the Company under Contribution for Defence and Regard; it renders the Pretender cheap, and Society a Nuisance. In fine, he never declined any just Condescension, and would rather stretch Complaisance a Point, than screw up his Gravity to Reservedness or Importunity.

He was a declared Enemy to Prodigality and Nearness, he proportion'd his Expences (as I have said) to his Incomes; he never spared Money when Occasions required it; nor flung it away *mal à propos*, to please a Frolick; he thought both Extreams equally vitious, that a sordid Parsimony was ungentleel, and Profuseness foolish. When he treated his Friends, he affected Neatness rather than Grandeur, and rather sought to gratify the Taste with Delicacies, than the Eye with Variety; for Feasts are to entertain the Palate, not Curiosity. In drinking he followed *Assuerus's* Orders; *Vinum quoque ut magnificentia Regia dignum erat, abundans & præcipuum ponebatur, nec erat qui nolentes cogeret ad bibendum: Sed sicut Rex statuerat præponens mensis singulos de Principibus suis, ut sumeret unusquisque quod vellet*: He thought it no less uncivil to press his Guests to drink, than to stint them, and could not endure an *English* Principle, that Custom has naturalized, and Intemperance has made free Denizon of the Country. A Man thinks himself welcome by halves, that is not quite drowned in a Barrel, and ill used till his Body be turned into a Hogshead, and his Head into a Wind-mill.

This Conduct, so contrary to the establish'd Laws of *English* Hospitality, displeased some; and a Gentleman took once the Freedom to inform him, that he lay under a disadvantageous Character for his Frugality. Sir, (said he) I doubt not of your Generosity, but People unacquainted with your Temper impeach you with Avarice; a single Bottle will not wash off the Asperion; you must marshal 'em upon the Table by Dozens: We love to look our Enemies in the Face, and must be carried from the Table, as well as from the Breach; for we drink, as well as fight, like Men, and all your *French* Ragousts are unpalatable, unless high-season'd with Burgundy and Claret. When the Ladies retire, adjourn to a By-room, and be sure to march at the Head of the Brigade, and lead it upon the Attack: Let your Provisions answer the Number of the Assailants; an *English* Man can cope with as many Bottles of *French* Wine, as *French* Men; and you know one to six is a over-match: Thus, Sir, you'll retrieve your Honour, and recover your Reputation from the Imputation of Stinginess, and ungenteel Slur of Parsimony.

This Gentleman had a real Esteem for *Ensebins*, but none for his Practice; he bore an Office, and possess'd a fair Estate in the Country. He was a good Companion at the Pot, and an Adorer of the Pipe: He laugh'd at those who placed Glory in Wounds, and broken Legs, and run their Heads against Bastions and Half-moons, for a place in the *London Gazette*, or the *Post-Boy*; he would not venture one single Pulse for the taking *Liste* or *Tour-nay*, nor fling his Money upon Doctors and Surgeons; much less be carried (like a Calf) from the Attack to his Tent, or his Grave: No, (said he) I came not into the World to be cannonaded, or bagonetted out of it; I will nurse up Life to the Extent of Nature, and leave it in my Bed, not in a Ditch.

However, tho' the Deputy-Lieutenant had no Inclination for Camp-glory, he was ambitious of Fame; but then he resolved to fetch it rather from the Cellar, than the Field; and indeed, he was a kind of *Flag-Man*, a *Vice-Admiral*, in all those Expeditions of Good-fellowship;

so beaten to the Trade, that no Body durst contend for the Command. So that, though by Commission, he was only Deputy-Lieutenant, his topping Embellishments entituled him to the Lieutenancy of the Country. I have seen Right Worshipful knock down half a Dozen under the Table in a Trice, and then he will clap and crow like a Game-cock. Nay, he swore he deserv'd a publick Complement for the Exploit, as well as our great Duke for his *Blangy*; because he slew more with his own Hand, and lost fewer than this mighty General; nay, and kept the Field into the Bargain. A Friend desired him not to prostitute his Quality and Commission to Scorn and Obloquy, by so mean, so unmanly a Vice; but he answer'd, those lay under a great Mistake, that mark'd it with Unmanliness. We drink like Beasts, (said he) when we drink least; but like Men, when we drink till we can neither go nor stand.

Eusebius was struck at his quaint Harangue, and more at his Principles: He thought Caution it self might sometimes be overseen, and Sobriety trappann'd by Company into Intemperance; but to gage Breeding by the Barrel, to turn Drinking into an Employment, and the Infamy of Drunkenness into a Perfection of human Nature, was extraordinary; he thank'd the Gentleman for his Advice, but desired leave to follow his own Method, till he had offered some better Reason to change it.

For, Sir, (said he) you persuade me to rescue my Honour from the Imputation of a pretended Vice, by committing a real one. You provoke me by the Motives of Glory, to Actions that degrade a good Man, and force an ill one even to blush. You misapply the Notions of Honour and Infamy; you blame and praise in the wrong Place; and thus you pronounce Monstrousness to be Proportion, and the Blemishes of Mankind to make up its Beauties. I lie (you say) under the Aspersions of Avarice; and nothing will remove the Calumny, unless I drown my Guests in Claret and Canary. I confess, the Remedy seems ten times worse than the Disease; I would rather be pointed at for a *Miser*, than be condemned for a *Drunkard*; that Vice indeed is uncreditable, but this is brutal; that makes an ill Man, but this throws
him

him out of his Species, and turns him into a Beast; nay, lays him below the vilest; for he is a Beast of Man's Creation, and by Consequence more monstrous than the lowest Part of God's, or rather he is a reasonable Beast, and irrational Man.

What a noble Spectacle must it be, to see a Club of Gentlemen of Figure and Quality, metamorphosed into Bedlams, and their Palaces into Mad-houses; to see 'em play the Ape and the Swine, and run out into Lengths of Folly and Extravagance? No doubt, it's an honourable Employment for a Master to play the *Mimick* and *Scaramouch* before his Men, to entertain them with Farce *Gratis*, and to fling a merry Interlude into their Salary; to out-do the *Roman* Bacchanals in Distractions, and to strain Jollitry, not into Annual, (for once a Year a wise Man may have leave to be mad) but into a daily Madness.

Good God! What a Scene did I once behold at Sir B—— F——'s! It gave me such a Surfeit of Wine, that for a Twelve-month, the very sight of a Bottle cast me into a Sweat and Agony. I began almost to believe that *Pythagoras's* Transmigration was rather a Truth, than Allegory or Fable; for in the Space of an Hour, a dozen Gentlemen commenced Beasts, and all of different Species; there were *Apes*, *Bears*, *Lyons*, and *Jack-calls*: Some roar'd, others yelp'd, and others howl'd. In one Corner there was making Quarrels, in another Love; here they sung, there they blasphemed; they kiss'd in one Place, and box'd in another: In fine, there was a Medley of Farce and Tragedy, of Folly and Madness, a Subject for Laughter and Tears; but when they began to return home, they play'd all at *cross* Questions, the Postilion crept behind the Coach, the Coachman into it, and the Master into the Box: For Wine is a Leveler, it either raises the Man to the Master, or throws down the Master to the Man. When Reason sleeps, Extravagance breaks loose; Quality and Peasantry pig together; there is no difference between a Lord and a Lacquey, but that he is more to blame; in a Word, they were in no Condition for a Journey; so that the Gentlemen were conveyed into Beds, and the Equipage camp'd in the Court.

Well,

Well, Sir ! replied the Deputy-Lieutenant, Oversights will happen, but Good-fellowship must go on, and a neighbourly Correspondence be improved.

As much Good-fellowship (said *Eusebius*) and Kindness as you please, provided you flush right Notions, and frame an Idea of both by the Rule of Reason, not of Custom ; but I cannot persuade my self, the Laws of Good-fellowship command me to drink away my Health and my Wits for a Frolick : Health is no Nuisance, nor Reason a Burthen. If you had a Fancy to a Cup of Poison, does the Ceremony of Good-fellowship order me to pledge you in the same Liquor ? Now over-drinking turns the best Ale in the Nation, and the best Wines in *France* into Poison. Indeed, they dispatch not by sudden Assault, as Ratsbane or Arsenick ; but by Mine and Siege ; however, their Operation is sure, and though their Malignity be slow, it's mortal.

Nor can I think any Principle of Friendship obliges me to help a Man to destroy his Estate, to sink his Family into Beggary, his Person into Contempt, and his Body into Diseases : Now your Kindness wades further into Mischief ; I must doze his Reason, and stab his Soul ; nay, and my own too. No Man certainly dares own this for Kindness, who is not actually drunk. Besides, you may as well entertain Heat with Cold, as Friendship with Drinking. Alas, good Sir, when Wine flies into the Head, Glasses fly about the Ears ; for when once Reason is drowned, Passion always swims on the Surface ; most of those Quarrels that end in Blood, begin in Wine ; Jollitry drunk too high, degenerates into Fury.

But, besides, Drunkenness is a Sin, and of a very black Dye ; it's one of those that shuts Heaven's Gate, and opens that of Hell to the Offender. Now, tho' it were as genteel as it's clownish, that very Consideration should fright those from the Practice, that bound not their Hope or Fear with *Sight* and *Sense* ; Kindness and Good fellowship must not take place of our Eternal Welfare, nor Ceremony of our Duty. If therefore Drunkenness be a Sin, is it none to invite, none to persuade a Neighbour to it ? Must a Gentleman be mark'd with Infamy, because he will not turn off Conscience ? Nor purchase the Reputation of House-keeping, at the Expence of his Soul ? I am not so fond of Esteem as to buy it by a base Action ;
nor

nor so fearful of Contempt as to avoid it by a Sin. I will not transform my self into a Brute, for the Reputation of a fine Man; nor stoop to the Office of a Tempter, for the Title of Generosity. No, no, Sir, in my House Guests shall neither be stinted, nor forc'd. I leave them to their own Discretion, and invite them to be merry, but not to be mad. I love a cool Head, and a calm Conscience; and I had rather see Flights of Distraction in Bedlam, than of Extravagance at Home. To conclude, I had rather be reproach'd for Sobriety, than caress'd for Intemperance; and lampoon'd for a Vertue, than Panegyrick'd for a Vice.

Well, well, Sir, (replied the Knight) we will not fall out for the Matter: Let every Man take his way; but give me leave to tell you, Conscience, and all your Fiddle Faddles will not screen you from Censure. When we go to a merry Meeting, we leave that Lumber at Home; but when we are Summoned to a *Quarter Sessions*, or so, then indeed we take it up behind us (if the Horse will carry double) for though it may be of Use in a Business of *Meum* and *Tuum*, it's a Burthen at a Feast, a Controuler of Mirth, and a Poison to Good-fellowship.

Eusebius bless'd himself at the grave Gentleman's Preachment; to hear Magistrate plead for Riot, and *Justices of Peace* for Disorder, seemed surprizing; but the Evil lies deep, there is no removing it; it's become a Branch of *English* Property, and we will no more part with the Vice of Drinking, than with our *Magna Charta*. We have received it from our Forefathers, and improv'd the Talent to Admiration; one Man infects another, and the present Sett of Tiplers will hand down the Disease to their Posterity; and thus the Distemper will run on without Cure, and continue without End.

DIALOGUE V.

Of his Recreations.

Eusebius was not so engaged in Piety, as wholly to lay aside all Recreation; he knew that some Divertisement was necessary to refresh the Body, and unbend the Mind; that a continual Application dispirits the one, founders

founders the other, and renders both unfit for Action? But then he took Care not to turn Diversion into Business, nor to play away his Time (like Children) in Trifles. Age had taken off the Passion he had for the Sport of Hunting; his Body could not endure the Violence, and his Inclination carried him to more moderate Exercises; he was often upon the Bowling-green in Summer, and to entertain Conversation would take a Game at Cards; but then he play'd for Diversion, not Gain; and would never venture more upon a Cast, than he could lose without the Danger of Impatience; for when Bets run high, Solitude baulks Pleasure, and the fear of losing turns Sport into Pain and Penance; it boils up the Passions into a Ferment, heats the Blood; and then an unlucky Hit flings a Man upon the Tenters.

Whatever he won was a Bank for the Poor; a kind of *Pecunia Sacra*, always employed in Charity; so that he fell upon a Secret (more beneficial than the pretended Philosopher's Stone, and more real) of turning Diversion into Vertue, and of raising the most ordinary and lowest Actions to the Dignity of the most Divine. Thus at once he refresh'd his Body, and improv'd his Time; or (in the Apostle's Language) pray'd and play'd, recruited his Spirits, and supplied his Neighbour; pass'd his time in Mirth, and yet redeemed it.

However, he used even the most harmless Recreations (as I said) like Physick for Health, not like Meat for Sustenance; for (said he) they are not the Business, either of a Gentleman, or of a Christian; and therefore whosoever suffers them to usurp his Time (allow'd for more noble Employments) plays the Child (tho' not the Innocent) while he thus trifles away his Life, and Bowls and Cards away those precious Moments, that once he will recal with Tears, but never recover. He therefore retired so soon as Civility permitted, and entertained himself with Reading; but he never would open a Book that struck at Morality, or questioned Religion; the one debauches Practice, the other Principle; and (he used to say) bad Books are the worse for being well writ; they subdue almost without Resistance, when they mingle Corruption with Wit, and convey Poison into Pleasure; but he spent whole Hours in the Lecture of those that treat of Piety; that lighten the Understanding, and

warm

warm the Will; that point out the way to Vertue, and with a Resolution to purchase it. Such he look'd upon as sure Guides, and profitable Entertainments; as supports in Solitude, and Friends in all the different Occurrences of Life and Action; they censure without Reproach, and praise without Flattery; they neither fawn on Gentlemen, nor overlook Peasants, but like Pictures made to sight, look equally upon all; nor was he content with the bare Speculation; he knew the Vertue of a Christian consists not in the Knowledge of his Duty, but in the Exercise of it, and therefore he drew by the Life; he copied from those Originals, and joined Practice to Theory, and thus he weaned himself from all those worldly things Men so eagerly pursue as Flies; he neither hoped for any Temporal Advantage, nor feared any Adversity; his Desires look'd beyond Time, and nothing but the Pains of the Damned were able to awake his Fear; so that he embraced Crosses and Favours with the same Affections, and always said, these led us indeed the easiest way to Heaven, and those the more secure; and thus he neither was fond of Life, nor dreaded Death, but equally disposed to keep his Post, or to abandon it at the first command of his great Master.

And indeed, he had such an Empire over his Passions, such a Submission to all the Designs of Providence, that he seemed (if not above the Reach) at least above the Sense of Adversity, even when he lay under the Weight of a Misfortune. His Niece whom he loved with the Tenderness of a Father, fell sick of a burning Fever: She deserved indeed his Affection; for she was set off with all the Perfections of a Woman, and enrich'd with all the Vertues of a Christian. One might truly say with the wise Man, she lived a great while, tho' she died at Seventeen, and that she was ripe for Heaven in the very Spring of her Age: She pass'd through a long Course of Pains, with an invincible Patience, and expected Death rather with the Courage of a Hero, than the Timorousness of a Woman.

Every one thought this Accident would put *Eusebius's* Philosophy to the Stretch; that a Blow in so sensible a Part, would strike out some Symptoms of Weakness; but they mistook the Man; he felt the Loss, but sunk not under it: He let fall indeed a Tear at parting, but wiped it

it off in a Moment, and he told his Friends, who wonder'd at his Unconcernedness, to be sorry she is not with me, when I believe she is better from me, is a Mark I value my Satisfaction above hers, and mourn for the Living more than for the Dead; it's Infirmary, not true Kindness, when we will not resign our selves to the Happiness of a Friend.

I believe she is in a State of Bliss, Why then should I weep for her, whom I suppose in a Place we all wish to be settled in? If she be not, my Affection will not ease her Torments, nor raise her from her Grave: So that my Grief will either be unseasonable or vain; it may render me miserable, but will add not a Grain to her Felicity, nor abate one of her Pains. But, in fine, God who gave her Life, is pleased to recal the Gift, What reason have I to complain of hard Usage? Rather I thank his Goodness for having lent me her so long, than blame him for taking her from me so soon; his Favours are free Gifts, no Debts: It's our Duty to receive them with Thankfulness, and to return them at the first Call with Submission and Frankness. These Dispositions seem'd so noble, so generous, that they became the Gentleman, as well as the Christian, and every Man confess'd his Character could not be rais'd too much, nor esteem'd enough: For Vertue, like the Sun, is more gazed on when Eclips'd, than when it glitters in Prosperity, and we may be sure it's Sterling when it bears the Touchstone of Affliction.

I cannot omit one Passage that happened in this young Lady's Sickness; it shows the Skill and the Conscience of Doctors are all of a Piece, and that they are oftner fear'd for killing than curing a Patient, or at least for doing no Harm, than for doing Good. I thought *Moliere* lash'd the Gentleman of the College with too much Freedom; that he entertain'd *Paris*, and the *Court*, at the Expence of the Faculty, and drew their Pictures at random, without any Regard to the Original; but the Jury of Physicians that sat upon this poor Lady's Life alter'd my Opinion, and forc'd me to own, that the Comedian has thrown more Truth than Fiction in their Character, and rather falls short than over-flourish'd it.

And first, half an Hour slip'd by in Ceremony, and Complement; then they gave an Account of Yesterday's
Ren:

Rendezvous, and exposed the Diary of their Debauchees; had not the Doctor in Ordinary put them in mind, they had forgot their Errand, and returned with their Fee, without leaving so much as a *Recipe*; but then they would not take the pains to step into her Chamber, but referred themselves to the Information of the Ordinary; he regaled the *juncto* with a Dissection of the Distemper, and pillaged *Willis de Febris* to rig out his Harangue. *Galen* and *Hippocrates* were brought upon the Stage; nay, and *Aristotle*: To compleat the Farce, *Greek* and *Latin* were served up in Plenty, and one Aphorism tumbled in upon the Back of another. A Maid told him the Lady grew worse, and that she was drawing towards her Agony: The Gentleman laugh'd at her Message. *It's impossible* (said he) *Hippocrates is plain, that Fevers come to a Crisis the fourteenth or one and twentieth Day; now this is only the Tenth: How then can your Mistress be so near her End?*

Hippocrates may say what he pleases (replied the Maid) but if you dispatch not soon, your Remedy will come too late.

Has she taken the Dose of Emetick (says the Doctor?) Yes, answer'd the Maid, but it had no Effect.

Bon (cries the Consult) a happy Prognostick.

It cast her into Convulsions (continued the Maid.) Better yet (says the Consult.) But alas, in spite of the Doctors *Better* and *Better*, the Lady grows *Worse* and *Worse*. A new Courier put a stop to Inquiry, and summoned the *juncto* to the Lady's Chamber: She lay in Extremity, a Subject of Compassion and Admiration; the *Emetick* put her upon the Rack; yet her Patience was stronger than the Pain. She seem'd almost to out-brave those Primitive Martyrs, who neither flinch'd in the Fire, nor cried *Oh!* at the Torment of Knives and Razors; and though her Force sunk every Moment, her Resignation to Providence was invincible.

One Doctor was for Bleeding, another for Causticks, a third for he knew not what, and a fourth for sending her to the Waters; their Skill was non-pluss'd, and they had already discharged their Latin, and poured out their stock of Aphorisms; so that, in fine, they concluded *temine contradicente*, for a *Bolus* of *Opium*, that she might depart without Pain.

Eusebius

Eusebius bore all their impertinent Jargon; but when he heard this barbarous Resolution, he was not Master of his Resentment. What (said he) Gentlemen, do you believe another State? That an Eternity depends upon this last Moment? If you do, with what Conscience can you in this fatal Circumstance, cast Reason into a Lethargy, when a poor Creature stands most in need of it? *You would forsooth put her out of Pain*, but your Pity is barbarous, and your Compassion cruel; for you deprive her of the very Power of asking God Forgiveness, and by Consequence of Pardon. Indeed, the vertuous Tenure of her Life is in some Measure an Assurance her Death will not be miserable; for it's rare to see a Person who has lived well, die ill: But, however, it's a great Step taken in the Dark; a Trip is fatal, and an Oversight may pitch her on the Wrong-side of the Shore, and then there is no Return. No, no, Gentlemen, if you can do her Body no good, you shall do her Soul no harm. Few Moments remain, let her dispose of them to Advantage; let her die in Pain, to revive in never-ending Pleasures.

This short Harangue propagated the *juncto*, and put an end to their Resolves: However, they took care of their Fee, but then left all Concern for the Lady behind them. The Ordinary stay'd not to cure, but to see her die. Indeed, this was extraordinary; but Doctors (like Judges) pronounce the Sentence, but seldom are present at the Execution.



DIALOGUE VI.

Whether it be expedient for Gentlemen to Travel; with some Directions to those who go Abroad.

*N*Eander's Father persuaded him to Travel, before he settled in the World: He was of the common Persuasion, that home-bred Gentlemen are only rough cast; that they must receive the last Strokes of Behaviour in *France* and *Italy*. But, *Neander*, who rated the Persecutions of a Christian, above all little Accomplishments of a Gentleman, and affected rather a Decency of Manners, than of Carriage, would not consent to the Proposal, till he

He had consulted his Oracle, *Eusebius*, and he resolved rather to follow his Judgment, than his own Inclination. He therefore gave him a Visit; the Father acquainted him of his Design, and asked his Advice.

My Son (said he) grows in Years fit for Improvement; he has Quality and Estate to support it. And besides, Nature has furnish'd him with a good Genius, and a sharp Wit, so that nothing is wanting to render him serviceable to his Country, and an Honour to his Family, but Experience. Now this cannot be well acquired but by Travelling. He has indeed all the Learning the University can give him; but then to steer wholly by Books, without looking into Men and Business, is like learning a Trade, without ever coming to the Practice: Who intends to be Master must draw by the Life, as well as copy from the Original, and join Speculation with Practice. My Relations are divided upon the Matter; some persuade me to send him Abroad, others to keep him at Home; some tell me Home-breeding will ungentleman him, and others, that foreign Education will turn his *English* Blood into *French* or *Italian*; favour me with your Opinion upon the Matter.

I am not (reply'd *Eusebius*) so fond of Travelling, as some of our Noblemen; nor yet so averse as others. A Man, no doubt, may reap great Improvement from the Tour of *France* and *Italy*, and also make the Journey to Disadvantage. He may rather glean up their Vices, than their Vertues, and return both a Clown, and a Debauchee. He may fall in love with their Wine, and their Women; and bring back nothing but a Wife, a Mistress, or a Disease, for a *Memorandum* of his Voyage. At least, I know some who left their Innocence and Money in the *Continent*, and landed at *Graves-end*, with as light Heads, and lighter Pockets, than when they first set out at *Dover*. I confess this wandring Humour spreads wide, and grows Epidemical: Men fancy Foreign Air purifies the Brain, as well as the Lungs; that Breeding and Experience sprout up in the Streets of *Paris* and *Venice*; and that a View of *Versailles* or *Marly*, transforms Rusticity into Behaviour. But alas, Sir, the *French* Climate breeds Clowns, no less than our *English*; and I have seen there as ill shap'd Gentlemen, as at *London*. Our Carriage, indeed, has something of the Lion, and theirs of

the Ape; ours Awes, theirs Delights; theirs is foolish, and ours surly.

You have drawn (says the Gentlemen) a disadvantageous Map of the Continent, and if Debauchery be the only Fruit of Travels, I think we may buy that Commodity nearer Home, at less Charge and Labour. For Vice thrives to Admiration in our Soil; and we have transplanted it these Ten Years into *Flanders, Germany, and Spain*; and, what is strange, our Stock is not sunk; nay, it rather rises every Day; and though often Men of other Trades slip aside, we hear no Debauchees turn Bankrupt of their Vices. But, under favour, though other Nations have their Defects, they are not quite bare of Perfections. They may set us Patterns for Imitation, as well as for Aversion; and by consequence, improve a young Gentleman, as well as corrupt him. Every Country produces Remedies as well as Poisons, and he deserves to die who leaves those for these.

No doubt (reply'd *Eusebius*) there are fine Things beyond Sea, and a young Man may waft over a handsome Cargo of *Italian* Improvements, with a Valize of *French* Behaviour. But, alas, Sir, they will lie upon his Hands, and rust in his Wardrobe for want of using. We hate the stiff and gumm'd Deportment of the *Italian*, and to be yolk'd in Ceremony, or tied up to Steps in Conversation. And the *French* Shrug only sits tolerably on a *Beau*, and intitles him to the Honour of a Fop.

But, Sir, (answer'd the Gentleman) Breeding consists not merely in a genteel Carriage, and Decency of Gesture; it reaches to the Improvement of the Understanding. I look upon a Man, whose only Ornaments hang upon the Surface, like those Palaces that are stately without, and unfurnish'd within. Now travelling manures the Understanding; it affords Knowledge and Discovery; it enlarges the Faculty, and gives a more extensive Insight into Things and Men: Whereas a home-bred Gentleman is confin'd to narrow Limits; he wants materials for Observation, and cannot work out a Subject for a genteel Discourse.

Besides, Sir, he learns the great Mystery of Foreign Governments; their *Fort*, and their *Foible*; the Interests of Princes, and their Designs: And thus at the same time he seasons Pleasure with Profit; he stages (if I may say so)

so) into Politicks, and rides Post into Business: He returns equip'd for Employment, and rigg'd out for an Embassy at least, to the *Cantons* or *Hans-towns*.

Oh, Sir, (said *Eusebins*) you send, I perceive, your Son abroad to catch Politicks. You should remember, we flush at Home that Game in every Tipling-House: It over-runs both Town and Country, and is sunk from an Imbellishment into a Nuisance. Our Cobblers and Tinkers take into their Consideration the *ardua regni negotia*, as well as our Parliament; and leave Holes in Shoes and Pans to mend the Government. I tell you, Sir, our Soil produces more Politicks than all *Europe* besides; so that to transport Foreign, is to send *Owls* to *Athens*. We are, in a Word, pester'd with those of our own Growth, and I believe a Prohibition to ship over external Politicks into *England*, might prove no less beneficial to the Nation, than that of bringing over *French* Wines, or planting Tobacco.

But, Sir, supposing our Gentleman arriv'd at *Paris* or *Venice*, what Company must he ply for those mighty Advantages you speak of? In one place, without doubt, the topping Minister of State; in the other, the Counsel *di Dieci*. Certainly in such Schools he may in a short time run thro' a Course of Politicks, and commence Doctor of State-Tricks. But do you think those *Achitophels* will unveil the secret Mysteries of their Masters to Strangers, and throw before them the *Arcana* of the Cabinet? No, no, Sir, he must be content with Town-Intelligence, or the Table-Reports of Treating-Houses; and then you may guess with what a Provision of Politicks, with what a Lading of Science he is like to freight the Packet-Boat at his return. I counsel you rather to furnish your Son with *Gazettes*, *Mercuries*, and *Clefs des Cabinets*. Here he may catch Language and Knowledge at the same Draught, and polish his Tongue and his Brain together. I assure you, Sir, I knew a Gentleman, who bid fair for the Reputation of a great Man, and an able Minister: He topp'd the Gravity of *Don Frederick de Toledo*; his Air was as mysterious as his Discourse; like the Pagan Oracles, he affected Riddle and *Innuendo*'s. One would have taken him for the *Grand-Vizier-General of Europe*, the common Manager of Treaties, and sole Depository of all the Cabinet Resolutions. Yet he own'd all his Intelligence to *Hol-*

land News-Books; and when the Wind blew from our Shore in the *Brill* Packet-boat's Teeth, he was at a loss for a Discourse. One would have sworn a North-west Gale had work'd upon his Brain, and blown his Wit and his Memory into *Norway* or *Denmark*.

But, Sir, do you fancy a Gentleman at his Arrival at *Paris* sends *Hue and Cry* after a Master of Politicks? No, no, this is point-blank against Custom and Precedent. His Business is to oblige Sense, not to cultivate the Understanding; he first regales his Eye with a View of *Versailles* and *Marly*, and then his Appetite with all the Delicacies of the Town. Tho' he brought from Home the bare Title of *Squire*, the *Parisians* will present him a Patent of Peerage, and the Noise of a *Jeune my Lord*, will hollow into his Attendance all the *Breteurs* and Sharpers of the Town. And when once he is fallen into such Hands, he will scarce get out of them till he has deliver'd his Purse, and pawn'd his Conscience. Believe me, Sir, a young Man that has Pleasures in View, will be shrewdly tempted to taste whether they be as agreeable to the Palate, as to the Sight, and charm the Sense, as much as the Imagination; and its odds he will never stand firm against the Temptation: For Flesh and Blood, accompany'd by Youth, have a strong Tendency to Evil; they plead hard for Liberty, and as eagerly against Constraint. And when a Youth lies at the Mercy of such Tutors, what can be expected but Debauchery? He will, in a word, first break through the Practice, and then through the very Principles of Morality. Besides, he is out of a Parent's sight, he is not aw'd by his Presence, nor within the Reach of his Correction: So that he ranges without Restraint, and plays the Prodigal without Controul.

Under favour (said the Gentleman) you suppose me little read in the Extravagancies of Youth, when you fancy I will lay the Reins on my Son's Neck, and abandon him to his own Conduct. Tho' (God be thank'd) his Behaviour be regular and untainted, his Innocence may be surprized. Youth has a natural Tendency to Lewdness; it wants Experience to wave Temptation, and Resolution to encounter it. In fine, Passion and Carelessness throws it off its Guard, and lays it open to Surprise. Now to obviate this Inconvenience, I have provided him a sober Governour, who knows Things and Men;

Men; who has seen the World, and makes no inconsiderable Figure: He is a Man of Parts, talks well, and I hope lives better. Such a Person is able to stop the Sallies of Youth, to awe it into the Bounds of Decency by his Authority, and to instruct it by his Prudence.

This Caution (answer'd *Eusebius*) is laudible and prudent; but I assure you, Sir, it seldom answers Expectation: I have known Governours who wanted Governours themselves, and were ten times more fit to receive than to give Instruction. Their Religion was as loose as their Manners; they believed any thing for Interest, and practised any thing for Pleasure. Now when the Governour is dissolute, who can expect Regularity from the Pupil? But suppose him clear of these Imputations, it's still a question whether the young Man either respects or esteems him: If not, it's odds his Instructions will make no Impression. They may beat the Ear, but will never touch the Heart. He may as well chastise the Wind as that Spark into Sobriety, who disesteems his Person. The Man reinforces the Counsel, and persuades more oftentimes than his Reason.

But farther, a young Man past Twenty is a resty Creature; his Passions are at their full growth, and consequently ungovernable. They contend hard for Liberty, and it's ten to one Pleasure will get the better of Precept: For in that Age Sense affects more than Duty; and the agreeable enchants more powerfully than the lawful. When the Law declares him *Major*, he will not easily submit to the Slavery of Minority, (*i. e.*) he will not be rid by Governours, nor led by Pedants, like Children, by their Hanging-sleeves. He supposes he can walk by himself, and stand upon his own Legs; and thus becomes so unruly that he will neither lead nor drive. What a fine *Menage* did I see at *Paris* between a Tutor and his Pupil? They liv'd in a state of War; the one camp'd in the *Fauburg St. Germain*, the other in the *Rue de Temple*; and had not the *Seine* run between, they might have come to Action; at last they agreed upon a Treaty: But before it was brought to a Conclusion, as many Couriers run between them as from *Gertrudenburg* to the *Hague* or *Versailles*.

I am sensible (said the Gentleman) these Inconveniences happen; and when a Pupil undervalues the Person

of his Governour, he seldom approves his Counsel: For it goes against the Grain to conform to the Advice of those we condemn. Besides, we presume Reasons cannot rise above the level of those that propose them: So that when we entertain a low Opinion of a Person, we disable his Friendship, and put him under an Impossibility of doing us any good. For this Reason I have pitch'd upon a *French* Minister; his Parts will call for Esteem, and his Character for Respect.

Upon a *French* Minister (reply'd *Eusebius*) what do you mean? Are our own Countrymen so destitute of Prudence, good Nature and Probity, that you could not fall upon one compleatly furnish'd for the Employment? Good God! My Lady's Woman must be *French*, as well as my Lord's *Valet de Chambre*; we cannot eat, unless *French* Cooks serve us up Ragouts, nor dress but *a la mode de France*. We hate the Nation, yet cannot live without the Natives. They screw themselves into the chief Families, and engross both Places of Trust and Profit, so that their Punishment has prov'd a Favour. For they enjoy abroad more Plenty, than they durst have expected at Home. Who can reconcile this Conduct to our Clamours? Who will not think we rail in Jest, when we thus carefs in Earnest? And that our Hearts are *French*, as well as our Cloaths?

We complain the Church of *England* is over-run with Fanaticism, that the Presbyterians over-top it in Number and Quality: What Wonder? When *French* Ministers train up the Nobility? Their Religion is Puritan, thrice refined; their Zeal has more Heat than Light, and more Peevishness than Charity. How often have they in *France*, made room for their Religion with the Sword, and bought Liberty of Conscience by Slaughter and Devastations? They are Republicans in Principles and Practice, and seldom obey when it's in their Power to command.

Now is it likely these Gentlemen will train up their Pupils in the Obedience to the Church? No, no; I would as soon send a Youth to learn Christianity of the *Musay*, as the Doctrine of the Church of *England* of these *Monseurs*. They hate the very Constitution of its Government, and long since pronounced its Ceremonies foolish and impious. Let us then cease to wonder, the Nobility

Nobility strikes off from the Church to Conventicles : *French* Ministers have brought Apostacy into Fashion, and raised the Spirit of Faction in *England*, as well as in *France* ; and I fear the Infection will dilate, so long as they wind themselves into Ecclesiastical Benefices, and govern the Children of the Nobility.

But waving a *French* Minister's Religion, I am not thoroughly persuaded of his other Abilities. I fear he will rather consult his own Interest, than his Pupil's Improvement, and husband the Occasion to his own Advantage. For those Gentlemen settle not among us to spend, but to gain ; to supply present Necessities, and to lay in Provisions against Age and Accidents. Now a Man that has Preferment in View, and a Fortune in his Head, will probably take the shortest way to his Journey's end. A generous Freedom (he knows) as the World goes, is no thriving Quality ; wholesome Advice, if unpalatable, revolts the Stomach, and alienates the Affection, that those, who countenance Vice, are better paid, than those that preach up Vertue. This is a strong Temptation to the Governour to slacken the Reins, to endear the young Gentlemen to him by all the little tricks of Condescendence and Flattery ; and then the Pupil commands, and the Governour says *Amen* to all his Extravagancies.

It's true, he betrays his Trust ; but alas, Sir, Traitors are no Phœnixes in our Age. However, he is true to his Interest ; and I find few solicitous of others Concerns, if their own Work goes on kindly. He may indeed fear a Reprimand from the Father ; but then he hopes a Fortune from the Son ; and (believe me) good Coin affects more than hard Words. You know, Sir, Men are more prone to adore the rising than the setting Sun, and to fawn on those who enter upon an Estate, than those who resign it.

You are then I perceive (said the Gentleman) no admirer of Travelling : You are for breathing our Native Air, and growing Gray under our own Elevation.

I say not so neither (answered *Ensebius*) I am not absolutely for it, nor universally against it. Travels may improve some, and ruin others. They may fit some for the highest Employments, and render others unworthy of the lowest. I think it convenient for the prime Nobility to take a walk into the neighbouring Kingdoms ; for

such are mark'd out for publick Business; they are, as it were, by Birth fix'd in Court, and may pretend to a place at the Council-Table, and to sit at the upper End of the Government. Now People in such Circumstances should lay in a competent Stock of *French* and *Dutch*, that they may treat in Person, not by Proxy and Interpreters. For Business goes on slowly, when carried on by Deputy, and Ministers seldom agree, when one understands not the other. It's proper for them to make some Acquaintance with *Pensionary Heinsius*, and *Monsieur de Torcy*, before they go over with a Character and Credentials. For the Quality of a Friend may hasten the Dispatches of the Minister; and the Capacity of the one, forward the Work of the other.

But then, I think, Gentlemen of a lower Rank should not always be upon the Ramble; especially those who raise not their Pretensions to Court-Offices, but confine their Ambition to the Dignity of a Country-Justice, or look no higher than the Place of a Deputy-Lieutenant; In fine, those who are cut out for the Country, and design to spend their Time and their Money among their Neighbours.

First, Because foreign Breeding is not *a-la-mode* out of Town. It's too fine complexioned for a Village, and as useless as a Coach and Six in the Mountains of *Glamorganshire*. He will scarce meet an Occasion once in a Twelve-month, to practice *French* or *Italian*; and a Country-Dance well perform'd will receive more Applause than a *French Minuit*, *Saraband*, or *Riccadone*. Besides, our Country Air will tarnish the Lustre of Outlandish Behaviour: Time and Conversation will wash off the Varnish, and then *Aristotle's* Aphorism, *Corruptio optimi fit pessima*, will have place; the best Manners degenerate into the worst, and the finest Gentleman makes the most compleat Clown. For what can be more antick, than Rusticity cut on Breeding? Methinks it resembles Canvass laid on Satin, or Embroidery on Linsy-woolsey.

Secondly, A Gentleman train'd up in the sensual Freedoms of *Venice*, and the gaudy Pageantry of *Paris*, will return with a Surfeit of a Country Life. He will regard his Home as a Banishment, and his own House as a Dungeon. An *Italian* Symphony strikes the Organ more smoothly than that of a Pack of Hounds. Comedies,
Opera's,

Opera's, and publick *Entrado's* of Princes and Embassadors draw more pleasing Prospectives in the Eye, than those of Dunghills or Cabanes. Gay Company affects more than Solitude; and Balls set off with all the glittering Gawdery of Silk and Silver, are far more, transporting than *Country-Wakes*.

Now a Gentleman that returns overgrown with these Notions, byass'd with these Inclinations, will he relish the Campaign, and pen up his Person and Happiness in a Village? No, no, he will take up in Town, and only visit his *Mancir* to refresh his Lungs, or his Purse. Since the middle of the last Age, our Way of living is no more *English*; like our Language, it's piec'd up of *French* and *Italian*; and to compleat the *Oleo*, we have throw'n into the Composition the Vices of *Holland* and *Germany*. The Nobility withdraws from the Country into Town: That noble Hospitality proper to our Nation is out of use, and almost out of Memory, and those Largeesses that entertain'd the Poor run in another Channel: Game sweeps away one Part, gawdy Equipages, or Misses the other. In the mean time the Provinces are drain'd of Men and Money. Some run to Town to spend Estates, and others to gain them. The ancient Seats of the Nobility are let out to *Jack-Daws* and *Screech-Owls*, or tumble under the Weight of Time, and Cattle graze upon their Ruins; *Jam seges est ubi Troja fuit*.

We may date this Change from the time Travelling became genteel, and Wandering *a-la-mode*. Foreign Commerce has brought in Foreign Customs; and as conquer'd Greece and Asia overcame the Roman Vertue and Sobriety, so France and Italy have debauch'd ours.

However, I acknowledge a young Man may improve by Travelling, if Caution be used: For beyond Sea there are great Vertues, as well as great Vices, and Examples that deserve Imitation as well as Aversion. You may polish the Body and the Mind, better the Gentleman, and perfect the Christian.

I.

In the first place, pitch upon a vertuous and prudent Governour. Youth is blind, and if it follows a blind Guide, their Journey will end in a Precipice, *Ambo in foveam cadent*. A Man that overlooks his own Duty to God, will not put a Pupil in mind of his. Our Instructions

Etions and Practice are generally of a piece ; and if this be tainted, those are seldom found.

2.

Let him be prudent, neither too indulgent on the one hand, nor too severe on the other. It's no less dangerous to keep too heavy a Hand over a Gentleman, than too light ; and to baulk all his Desires, than none. A Governour may lose his Authority by too much Stiffness, as well as by too much Condescendence. And if he commands with Haughtiness, he will certainly be disobey'd. To refuse a young Man a just Liberty is a Temptation to take it, and if once the Ice is broken, he will shake off Dependence, and discard Respect.

3.

I would not have a great Fault pass without a suitable Correction, nor a small one punish'd beyond Proportion: For if the Reprimands are equal, the young Man will fancy the Faults are also, and then he will conclude it's better to be teaz'd for something, than to be rated for nothing. When we draw near one and twenty, Severity is out of Season ; we may be led indeed into our Duty by Kindness, but hardly hector'd into it by Roughness. A Governour may maintain his Character, if he pretends only to advise, but will certainly forfeit it, if he presumes to command with Empire and Superciliousness: And therefore I would rather have him wait upon his Pupil as a Companion, than as a Spy and a Censor ; and ply him more with Counsel than Authority. We often yield frankly to the one, and always with repugnance to the other.

4.

Let him not stay too long in a great City ; when he has view'd what is worth Observation, let him pursue his Journey. A long Stay breeds Acquaintance, and Acquaintance exposes to Debauchery. A Man that knows no Body, will have no Temptation to tempt another to ill, and is out of the Danger of being tempted ; for who will set upon an *Incognito* ? Familiarity goes before Criminal Assignations ; and Privacy planes the way for Extravagance.

5.

The e is not, perchance, a City in the World better stock'd^r with Men of Parts and polite Behaviour than Paris ;

Paris; and none more easy and sociable to Strangers. A young Man may improve by such Conversation: He may enlarge his Understanding, and open to himself a more extensive Prospect than by Study and Application: And thus he will enter into a handsome Provision of Sense, not only without Trouble, but even with Delight: He will raise a Fortune in Knowledge, without the Drudgery of Study, and transplant another's Science into his own Skill.

6.

But then if he may better himself by the Company of Men, he will certainly expose himself to a thousand Dangers. If he frequents the Conversation of Women, their Language charms, their Expressions insinuate, and their Air is imposing; they paint Gallantry with Wit, and both with Freedom; so that at the same time they attack the Understanding and Will, and Conquer both almost without Resistance. How many have I known of our Nation fascinated by these *Syrens*, enchanted by these *Circes*. They stole away their Hearts and their Heads; emptied their Brain and their Purse, and completely equip'd 'em for a Mad-house or an Hospital. The Passion was too strong for Precept, and the Oratory of the Lady's baffled the Counsel of Governours. For Love is without Ears, as well as without Eyes, and, what is worse, without Understanding. It's true, we send our Children abroad to learn *French* Courtship as well as Modes; but this Errand is as Unchristian as Unnecessary. We carry the Principles of this Science within us, and Nature alone will teach it at home without the Assistance of Outlandish Preceptors. Too great a Proficiency in the Art is rather to be fear'd than Ignorance; and it's ten to one, that in spite of Caution, young Men will improve it some Years too soon, than a Moment too late. And this is the Reason some leave their Hearts and their Conscience in *France* and *Italy*; and others return with a poor Wife, and some with an impudent Curtizan.

7.

I would not have a Gentleman square his Observations by Dr. *Lyster's Memoirs of Paris*; they are below remark, and sit better on an *Ignoramus*, than on a Fellow of the *Royal Society*, or a Gentleman. Let him not therefore trifle away his time in examining whether *Asparagus* tastes

taste sweeter in *April* or *January*; or the *Roman* Lettuces better than our *Silesian*, or the *Fiacres* more conveniently hung than my Lord Embassador's Coach; let him not trot about to view rare Collections of Cockle-shells, or Skeletons, or Todpoles and Spiders: For after all, these Discoveries are not worth the Candle; nay, within an Ace as ridiculous as *Caligula's* Journey to the Sea-shore to load his Army with this childish Trumpery. *Lassel's* Voyage will be far more useful than *Lyster's*; it will furnish Matter for Inquiry and Observation, and both delight and instruct in your Journey. Here is a short draught of the Advantages and Disadvantages of Travelling. I have given you my Judgment of the Matter, and leave to your Prudence the Determination.

I am infinitely oblig'd (said the Gentleman) for your Advice and Freedom; and am persuaded young Men must not be sent Abroad without Care and Caution. I will take the most just Measures Prudence can suggest, to keep my Son within the Bounds of Duty. I am wholly of your Opinion, that Vertue is the most accomplishing Ornament of a Gentleman, that this alone renders him amiable in this World, and happy in the next.

D I A L O G U E VII.



Of the Soul's Immortality.

EUSEBIUS was invited in *Christmas* by a Gentleman to an Entertainment. He found a great deal of Company, who were resolv'd to be merry; there were some sober Gentlemen among them; but then others were of the Town-cut, *Young Goddamme's*, that spoke ill, and lived worse. They had placed their *Requiem* in this World, and turn'd off all Thoughts of the other; and when Claret had warmed the Head, Impiety broke out at the Tongue; their Heart sat upon their Lips, and discover'd to the Company the Corruption that lurk'd within, and one might read the Secrets of their Souls in their Words. Some were for the *High-Church*, others for the *Low*, and most for no Church. Their Faith was Faction and Interest, and Passion the sole Motives of Credibility.

A grave

A grave Gentleman thought it his Duty to rebuke the Insolence of the daring *Salmoneans*: Gentlemen, (said he) this Discourse neither suits with your Company, nor your Profession: It makes the very Soul of a Christian shrink back, and leaves Nature in a kind of Chill: If you take the Liberty to blaspheme God, and play upon Religion, I must take the Freedom to defend both; to desire you to leave the Subject, or the Room. For to be short, these Sallies breed Disgust, they are Penance and Mortification to the Company. God will call you to Account one Day; and if he winks at your Impieties in this World, he will punish them in the other.

One of the Blades (whom I call *Athymius*) received the Correction with a Smile. If God (says he) vouchsafes to let me run my Course smoothly in this World, I will venture his Anger in the next. For to be plain, I am of Mr. Dryden's Opinion; *Our Minds are perpetually wrought on by the Temperament of our Bodies, which makes me suspect they are nearer allied, than either our Philosophers or School-Divines will allow them to be.*

That is, (replied the Gentleman) our Soul is indistinct from the Body: Or in plain *English*, nothing but a Heap of organized Matter; this is a fine Scheme: The System *a-la-mode*, raked out of the Ashes of *Hobbs* and *Pomponatius*, and squared for the Latitude of Libertinism; that *Post Mortem nulla Voluptas*, removes, rubs, and planes the Way for Liberty; for when the Prospect of another Life is shut up, Men may sport without Restraint, and play without Remorse; but this is to pretend to Wit, to Con the Poets.

Sir (said *Athymius*) less of Exclamation, if you please, and more of Reason: Heat must not decide the Question, but Argument. I am not for implicit Faith, nor over-resigning to Authority; my Way is to examine before I assent, and to preserve Reason in its just Liberties: Absolute Submission keeps us in a kind of Minority; it palls the Understanding, and exposes us to Imposture; always to walk on Crutches, is the Way to lose the Use of our Limbs, and to steer by another's Reason, to forfeit the Benefit of our own.

Reason (answer'd *Eusebius*) is an excellent thing; but those who bear the Charter by which they enjoy it, seem not over-fond of the Possession; if your Soul be material,

material, what becomes of this topping Prerogative? Man must draw in his Figure, and herd with Beasts: At most there will be no more difference between them than between a *Fox* and a *Beetle*, or *Scotch-Cloth* and *Fine Holland*; the Materials are the same, the Distinction lies in the Fineness of the Contexture.

I confess (reply'd *Athymius*) I should esteem my self happy were I unprovided of Reasons that demonstrate my self less than popular Errors make me; for after all, to turn Advocate against one's self, to plead against our greatest Prerogative, and to dispute one's self out of a Possibility of being happy in the next World, is the greatest Misfortune that can befall a Man in this, but Truth must have place. I love to know my just Dimensions, and as I scorn to resign the least Perfection that belongs to my Nature, so I will never usurp those that are foreign: I'll not grow great by Flattery, nor claim a Dignity supported by Ignorance and Vision. If you can prove by dint of Reason my Soul is immortal, I'll submit to Demonstration; and you shall see by my Conduct, I expect Heaven as the Recompence of Vertue, and fear Hell as the Punishments of Vice.

Under Favour (said *Ensebins*) methinks your Opinion calls louder for Demonstration than mine; for if it prove false, you forfeit Heaven for the Mistake, and must groan under all the Thorns of the Damned into the Bargain; whereas I shall go off with the Satisfaction of living like a Man, tho' I die like a Beast. And tho' I am not happy in the next World, I shall be out of the reach of Misery. In fine, I bid fair for Heaven, tho' I fall short of my Pretensions. But however, seeing you put me upon the Proof, I'll condescend to your Desire; yet though you promise to submit to Evidence, I cannot be satisfied of the Performance.

I suppose, Sir, you will take the Word of a Gentleman (reply'd *Athymius*.)

The Word of a Gentleman (answer'd *Ensebins*) made of Soul and Body, goes as far with me as a *Bond*, but your *Matter* and *Motion* Gentlemen's Credit, sinks low in my Esteem; for look ye, Sir, any little Accident from without may ruffle your present Situation, and jumble you into a new Set of Resolutions; it may flush a new Train of Thoughts,

Thoughts, and then adieu to the old: For Matter and Motions are bizarre Things, humourfome and capricious to Excess; they are arbitrary and uncontroll'd; you must *will* and *nill* as they please: every new Impulse flings a new Figure, and wears off the old; so that you are guided by Fate, and drove on by Chance in your System, and consequently must be an Infidel, or a true Believer, an honest Man, or a Knave, in spite of your Teeth. Now I can no more trust such a Man than a Puppet: I will not venture a Cross upon his Honour, nor hazard a single Six-pence upon his Reputation; for who is not Master of himself, can be no Slave to his Word.

But for all that (said *Athymius*) my Word will go a great Way, and my Neighbours look upon it as good a Security as a Mortgage.

I believe you (answer'd *Eusebius*) but this is an Instance that those Neighbours are persuaded your Soul is something more than Matter, when they take your Word, nay, and your self too when you give it; for who but Fools will trust a Man that is moved by Chance, that is push'd on by Fate, and drawn by Necessity. Thus you see, Sir, you disavow your Tenet, when you act like a Man, which makes me suspect you only abet it, when you intend to play the Beast, and that your Disease lies more in the Heart than the Head.

If you please (said *Athymius*) cut short, and come to the Point; Preambles take up Time and rid no Ground; but pray let us not steer within Sight of Metaphysics, nor fall to capping of Syllogisms. I am for plain Reason without *Fard* or *Fucus*, and it works more kindly in honest *English*, than in the barbarous *Ergotism* of the Schools.

I am for you (reply'd *Eusebius*) and you shall hear those Arguments that are more easily understood than confuted. Tell me then, is it better to be a Beast or a Man?

I perceive (answer'd *Athymius*) you are fallen into a Fit of Bantering; the Question is scandalous, and the very Comparison is degrading to humane Nature; he who prefers a Beast to Man, deserves to be thrown among them.

D I A L O G U E VIII.

If the Soul be Mortal, it's better to be a Beast than a Man.

Enseb. **Y**OUR Answer is most true, but then your Tenet is no less false; give Attention to the Proof; nothing falls under Choice but Good, and without doubt a greater Good is preferable to a less: Now Good and Happiness are synonymous, therefore a greater Happiness is preferable to a less. Our present Dispute falls therefore within this Compass; whether a Beast, in your Scheme of the Soul's Mortality be more happy than a Man: I contend it is, and prove it thus.

It's evident the Bodies of Beasts are more robust than those of Men, they are neither so sensible of Heat nor Cold; their Constitutions vary not with the Seasons, nor change with the Barometer. Hence may Diseases spare them that assail us; they apprehend not their Pains before they come, nor remember them when past; they only groan under the present, and so their Dolors are momentary.

Besides, their Pleasures are more affecting than ours, and their Enjoyments more pure; they are purchased without Care, and lost without Trouble; they are neither followed with Remorse, nor waited on by Repentance; they are not clapt on the Rack by Jealousy, nor haunted by the Fury of Ambition; they are too content to hope, and not miserable enough to fear; they know no more what it is to be greater, than to be less, and therefore take no Measures to conserve Fortune, or to better it.

But poor Man lies open to the Assaults of a thousand Calamities that overlook Beasts; his Body is an Hospital-General of all Diseases, and he entertains them at the Expence of his Ease, and (in the end) of his Life too: But the Diseases of his Mind are more numerous and more tormenting; Hope drives one way, Despair another; Solicitude discomposes the Head, Jealousy the Heart; Envy qualms on his Bowels, Prodigality on his Purse; he keeps no Mein either in Prosperity or Adversity; that draws his Reason, this oversets his Patience;

he is insolent in one State, abject in the other; and that his Misfortunes may be without Remedy, as well as without Bounds, he calls back past Miscarriages to torment himself again, and conjures up the Ghosts of his departed Pleasures, to transform them into Furies; and when he can discover in the future no real Objects of Disgusts, his Imagination creates them. He springs Chymera's, and trembles at Monsters that have no Being but in Fancy; yet though they are fictitious, his Fears are real, and by consequence his Misery.

Indeed he is not without Pleasures, because not without Sense; but then they are seasoned with so many bitter Ingredients, that they rather disgust than delight. What shall I say of those brutish Transports of Lewdness, that hate the Sun, and range about in Shades and Obscurity? Of those Obscenities that make up here the *Mahometical Elysium* of Libertines, and in good time will throw them into the real Hell of the Christians. In this Point the Advantage stands for the Beasts; their Passion is as keen, their Sense as acute as Man's; and by consequence, their Sensation as affecting; but then their Pleasure is not dash'd with Shame, nor bought at the Expence of Honour or Conscience; they contrive no Plots to steal Satisfaction, no Intrigues to conceal it; it ends without Regret, without Remorse, and never stabs at parting. But Fear always succeeds Man's criminal Pleasures, and even the Atheist that laughs at Hell, is at the same time forc'd to tremble at it. If therefore the Pleasures of Beasts are at least equal, and Troubles less, we may justly conclude, even in this Point, they are more happy.

It's true, neither Beasts nor Men have found a *Recipe* against Death, but then they march off without Concern, and receive the Blow without Reluctancy, because, without Knowledge; but this parting Pang hangs cruelly in our Heads, and sometimes dyes them Gray before the Age of Twenty. For after all, it's an unpleasant Reflection, that we must sink into a State of Insignificancy, and become cumbersome to our selves, and unacceptable to others; that we must grow less and less, and fall away by Inches. In fine, that though we nurse up continually the Decays of Nature, Death will be too hard for Doctors and Surgeons, and tear us from the Enjoyments of all

those sensual Objectss, in which we place our *Requiem*. So that I must conclude, that seeing Beasts (in your Supposition) are more happy than Men, it's better to be a Beast than a Man.

The Consequence is shameful, beyond Scandal, and a Man must be weary or ignorant of the Dignity of his Nature to admit it. What does the Happiness of a Horse deserve Envy? Is the Punishment of *Nebuchadnezzar* become an Ornament to the whole Species? Such a Creature should be thrown below his Kind, and condemn'd to wander on the Mountains with Bears and Lions.

Athymius. You have held forth with much Emphasis upon the Happiness of Beasts, and Calamities of Man; but you flag in your Inference: For who would chuse rather to be a Stone, than the most wretched Man that ever breathed? Yet those brave Ages are out of reach of Fits of the Gout, and incapable to receive uneasy Impressions.

Eusebius. Were I sure my Soul was Mortal, I should chuse rather to remain in a State of Nothing, than to be miserable; for I can't understand why *Being* is better than *not Being*; only because in one State we have agreeable Sensations, and none in the other; and I declare that Existence without Pleasure here, or hereafter, is no Favour, and with Torment a Burthen; and were I sure never to be pleased, I should wish my self into Nothing, and pray for Annihilation: For to maintain that a *miserable Being* is preferable to *no Being*, or *no sensible Being*, is the wildest *Thesis* that Folly can abet, and I believe the bravest Champions of this strange Paradox may be racked, or even bastinado'd out of the Error.

Athymius. Supposing Beasts equal Men in the Perception of agreeable Sensations, are less Subject to unpleasing ones, yet they are void of Reason. This Advantage is proper to Man; and I must tell you, one Grain of Science weighs more than a Tun of sensual Satisfaction; this discovers the Beauty of Vertue, and the Deformity of Vice, and throws before the Will a thousand Reasons to embrace *that*, and hate *this*: A vertuous Man, tho' miserable, walks in a higher Sphere, than the most happy Beast. Who would not charge up to a Cannon's Mouth for a good Cause, and rather expose his Life

than desert Justice? I would rather give up my Body to a Tyrant, than betray a Friend, and die Innocent, than live a Traitor: It's worth coming into the World to go vertuously out of it. A Man whose Vertue will bear the Trial of Pain, without shrinking upon the Torture, is more happy than a Debauchee upon the Throne. Suffering renders not a Man bad, or unhappy, but the Cause; Reason pronounces the Tyrant miserable that murders Innocence, not the Hero that dies for it. Seeing therefore Beasts are below those Noble Qualities, Wisdom and Vertue, I must conclude, that the most wretched Man is more happy, than the most fortunate Beast; and therefore, it's better to be a Man than a Beast.

Eusebius. You harangue upon the Excellence of Science like a Peripatetick, and huff upon Vertue like a Stoick; I never read *Seneca de contemnenda morte*, but methinks I hear a Coach and Six rattle in the Street; they both make a Majestick Noise, and almost fright and please at the same Time.

Science, no doubt, is a fine Thing, and Vertue a better; but if we suppose no future State, their Price must fall, and the Purchase of both will never pay the Charges of a hundred Objects that fall within the Sphere of our Knowledge; few please us, many are indifferent, and most torment us. Is it so diverting an Entertainment to reflect, that Friends betray me, and Enemies persecute me? That wise Men scorn, and buffoons burlesque me? Were we void of Knowledge, how should we languish under Hope, or fret under Desire? How should we lie open to the Assaults of Fear, or groan under the Pangs of Despair? It's certain in your Scheme, this mighty Prerogative would rather deserve the Name of a Curse, than of a Blessing; for though it made us greater, it would render us more unhappy.

Courage, Fidelity, and Vertue are great Advantages; even upon the Rack, in Supposition of the Soul's Immortality, and Innocence in Flames is preferable to Guilt in Power and Pleasure; for this leads us to an Eternal Misery, and those to everlasting Happiness; for certainly, that Creature is far removed from a State of Happiness, that must account for a criminal Satisfaction in Fire and Brimstone; and he deserves not the Name of Miserable, who passes through a short-liv'd Martyrdom into a perpetual Refreshment.

But then, if our Souls sink into nothing, when our Bodies fall into the Grave, Vice has all the Advantage over Vertue; for *that* brings present Pleasure, *this* Pain; and then in the other World, the one fears no Punishment, and the other expects no Reward. So that neither Knowledge, nor the Practice of Vertue, add a Grain of Happiness to Man, if his Soul be Mortal.

But, what do we talk of Vertue? It's a *Chymera* in your Hypothesis; you destroy not only the Thing, but the very Powers of it. Can Choice spring from Fate, or Vertue from Necessity; how can we be Masters of our Actions, when we are not of our Souls? And if these are nothing but a Mixture of Matter and Motion, where is Liberty to act or not act, and by consequence Vertue? For who deserves Blame for what he could not avoid, or Praise for following the Impulse of Necessity?

Athymius. You may flourish on the Happiness of Beasts, and the Miseries of Man, till Doom's-day, but you will never persuade me to truck Nature with an Ass?

Ensebius. For all that, Sir, Men of your Principles generally make good Progress in the Art of Transformation. I knew some at Twenty, that became Centaures, half Beast, half Man. Reason declared them Men, the Abuses of it Asses; Intemperance Swine, and Lewdness Goats or Baboons.

Athymius. Reason ends, when Raillery begins. You have drain'd the Subject, for I perceive Sense runs low, let us start another Argument.

The Second Proof.

Ensebius. If Man's Soul be Mortal, his *summmum bonum* must consist in the Pleasures of the Body, in the Satisfaction of the Senses: For seeing his Nature is wholly Material, like that of Beasts, his End cannot be different. Whence it follows, that as Man's Happiness and Perfection rise with his Brutality; and that he sits in the height of his Greatness, when he appears as little as Lewdness can make him; the Reason is, because every thing is in the full State of its Perfection, when united to its last End; then its Capacities are filled, and this Society lays asleep both the Unquietness of Desire, and the tormenting Impressions of Hope or Fear. If therefore the Pleasures of Sense are Man's ultimate Happiness, the more he indulges, the more happy he is, and more

perfect. Wherefore our King and Parliament should call in all those Laws that discountenance Vice, and fine Lewdness. It was an Act of Injustice to make 'em, and is of Cruelty to execute 'em; they scare Men from their Duty, and fright them from their *summum bonum*; they stigmatize those Actions with Shame, that deserve Applause, and canonize Sobriety and Self-denial, with such as call for Infamy; for certainly it's laudable to prosecute our last End with the utmost Care and Diligence; for this we came into the World: The Pursuit of it is our Duty, and its Possession the Top of our Felicity; therefore Rapes, Adulteries, Incests, and all those Pleasures that smooth the Organ, and oblige the Body, are exempt from Prohibition; they have nothing ill but what is thrown off 'em by Prejudice, Education, and Mistake.

But this is not all, for Reason tells me, my sovereign Good is preferable to all others, and that I may comply with any Means to purchase it: If therefore it be placed in the sensual Operations of this Life, to conserve it, I may swear *Pro* and *Con*, blaspheme God's Goodness, and abjure his Being. I may sheer off from one Religion to another, profess all, and believe none; to fence against Death. Must not that Doctrine be monstrous in it self, that is so flamingly impious in its Consequences? It's a Spawn of Hell; I wonder it infects not the Air, and turns all into Plague and Poison.

Athymius. Under Favour, these Inferences flow from Mistake, not from the Mortality of the Soul.

Eusebius. From Mistake! If the Soul be Material, must not its supream Felicity consist in the Fruition of some temporal, some sensual Object?

Athymius. Some Philosophers are of this Opinion.

Eusebius. It is therefore lawful to postpone any inferior Good to the Supream, to hazard all Accessaries, to ensure the Principle.

Athymius. What then?

Eusebius. Why: I may at any rate conserve Life, if in Danger; for this is the Basis, the Foundation of Happiness; so that if a Tyrant commands me to deny God, with a Pistol in one Hand, and a Sword in the other, I may comply without Offence to my Maker, or Scandal to my Neighbour; and then your Crimes *minorum gentium*, upon the same Account, must stand for Vertue.

Athymius. You misrepresent my Doctrine, and expose it in so monstrous a Dress, to hollow in the Rabble upon me. I tell you therefore once more, it's more noble to die a Man, than to live an Impostor: For, as I said, Man's ultimate Felicity consist in the Practice of Vertue, and his Misery in the Exercise of Vice: Now in the forementioned Circumstances, we must give up our Carcasses to Fire and Faggot, rather than secure it by a Crime; for of two Evils, Reason tells me, I must chuse the least; now it's a less to resign Life, than to forfeit our Happiness, that consists in Vertue, by Thefts, Murthers, or Adulteries.

Eusebius. No more of Vertue as you love Sense; in your Scheme, it's nothing but Sound and Vision.

Athymius. Though the Soul be Mortal, some Actions may (I presume) be conform to the Dictates of right Reason, and others deform.

Eusebius. To the Dictates of Divine Reason, but not of Man's; for Reason in your Hypothesis must be filed off the List of our Prerogatives: This glorious Quality sinks into bare Instinct, and nothing clashes with any innate Principle that obliges Sense.

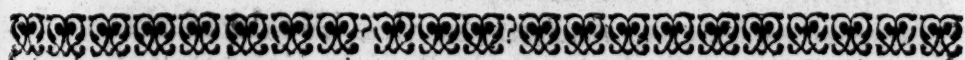
Besides, though some Actions were deform, and others conform to right Reason; yet those could not be worthy of Blame, nor these of Praise, because an Agent compounded of Matter and Motion acts by Impulse and Necessity, and by consequence can neither practise Vertue nor Vice.

But supposing him capable of Vertue, yet we shall find it a less Evil to desert Vertue, than to die in its Defence; for if the Soul be Mortal, Death is destitute of the very Appearance of Good; it strips a Man not only of Happiness, but of the very Hope of retrieving the Misfortune, for it throws him into a State of *Nothing*. Now Sin (in your Theology) corrects the Evil with some Grains of Good; it preserves Life, the Basis of Happiness, and tho' it stops the Stream of Felicity you place in Vertue, it does not drain it; he may rise after his Fall, and so recover his lost Happiness: Death therefore being the greatest Evil, he may purchase the Continuation of Life at the Expence of Honour, Honesty, and Conscience.

Athym. Death for the Defence of Vertue, has nothing evil but Fancy; bear off the gally Vizours, and you will

will discover nothing but Charms: Can Imagination frame a sight more ravishing than a Hero that declares for Vertue on the Scaffold, that dares be honest in spight of Torments? Such a noble Cause melts an expiring brave Soul into Transport and Extasy; it oversets his Faculties with Pleasure, and drowns them in an Ocean of Delight: To soar above the common Impressions of Fear is a noble Flight, and to laugh in the Face of Torments a beautifying Piece of Courage.

Euseb. For all that, you will give me leave to tell you I admire more your Martyr's Stupidity, than his Bravery; and I am apt to believe, he would resign you all his Pleasure, if you would take his Pain into the Bargain. But suppose he overflows with Delight in this critical Moment, he flashes into nothing the next. What Proportion therefore is there between the loss of Life that is Eternal, and the Satisfaction of a Moment? If therefore the Soul be Mortal, Vice with Pleasure is preferable to Vertue without Reward, and by Consequence your Hero dies rather worthy of Pity than Applause; because he chuses Death void of all Good, before Life the Basis of all Happiness, and so crosses manifestly upon that Statute, by which the present Controversy is tried; *Of two Evils, the less is to be chosen.*



DIALOGUE IX.

If Man's Soul be Mortal, he has no last End.

Atbym. **T**Hese Arguments *ab absurdo*, are ill featured, they raise more Dust than Light, and rather puzzle than convince; give me a direct Proof that the Soul is Immaterial, and I fling up the Cause.

Euseb. Absurdities are the Spawn of Falsehood, not of Truth; and when the Sequel is absurd, the Thesis cannot be reasonable; if therefore a Consequence of the Soul's Mortality cut upon the known Truth, the Tenet it self must be Erroneous. These Arguments then are well complexioned, and fit for the Post I assign them; they spring Evidence, and flush Conviction; Obstinacy may withstand them, but Reason cannot: However, give me leave

leave to explain another Inference of your Opinion, and then I will come to those Proofs you call for.

Surely, you are not so great a Stranger to your own Desires, as not to feel an Inclination to be happy; this Passion is hereditary to the whole Species; it accompanies us in all Stations, and even to the Death-bed, when all other Appetites either sleep or expire, this grows more keen and ravenous: Now, why has Nature stamp'd on our Souls such a longing after Happiness? Why has it inflamed us with so fond a Passion, that we court it under a thousand Disguises? Why has it equip'd us for Conquest, if Victory be impossible? Certainly at our Creation, God never intended to treat us like *April Fools*, by sending us on Adventures, that must end not only in Disappointment, but Affliction.

All Philosophers take it for a *Postulatum*, that *natura nil agit frustra*; if therefore Nature never acts in vain, the carking Desire of Happiness that haunts us from the Cradle to the Coffin, may be satiated by the Fruition of some Object. I say satiated, for Happiness cannot be compleat, whilst we desire what we do not possess, or fear to be discarded of what we enjoy; for Desire implies Want in the very Notion, and Fear a Possibility of Want, and both suppose Uneasiness and Dissatisfaction, and by consequence exclude Felicity.

Now it's evident, nothing in this World is able to satiate the Heart of Man, the Possession never answers Expectation; the most promising Enjoyments languish upon Experience, and sleep upon the Senses; we rowl from the Possession of one Object, to the Desire of another; dissatisfied in all States, content in none. *Alexander* the Great could never put any Bounds to his Ambition, though he did to his Conquests; his Desires widen'd with his Dominions, and when he had almost conquer'd one World, his Pride would have attempted the Conquest of a Thousand; the prodigious Treasures of the *East* could not stop his Avarice; his Wishes were as prodigal as his Largeesses: So that his Wants ran higher than his Revenue, though he had Ten Millions of Talents, he possess'd nothing, because he desired more; his Pleasures of Sense kept pace with those of his Power; yet after all he was not happy, because dissatisfied.

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Now if mighty Princes who walk on Crowns, and tread on Silver, who have Power to command Pleasures, and a Fund to support them, feel the Points of Thorns on Beds of Roses, the Pangs of Want in the Arms of Plenty, Crosses in Success, and Disappointment in their most fortunate Enterprizes, must we not pronounce them miserable in the very Height of their Felicity? And if it can be found neither in Empire, Riches, nor Sensuality, nor in all together, must we not conclude Man's *summum bonum* dwells in a superior Region; and that we must leave this World before we can enter upon the Possession of it?

In a word, the Desire of Happiness is ingrafted in our Nature, it may therefore be attained, because it's impossible Men should be born with a natural Tendency to a Chymera; there is no meeting it in this World, therefore we must expect it in the other; our Souls therefore survive our Bodies, and if for one Moment, they must remain eternally; for without this perpetual Duration, there can be no Content, because no Security.

Athymius. I own Philosophers have been at a Plunge to assign this *summum bonum* of Man: Some have seated it on the Pinnacle of Honour; others have placed it in the Pleasures of the Body; but the first is too thin, too airy, and too precarious, to satiate a reasonable Soul; and the second too brutal. I am inclined to fix it with *Aristotle*, in the Satisfaction of our most noble Faculty, that has no Dependance on Fortune, nor lies within the Reach of Casualties: Now it's agreed on all Sides, that nothing comes up to the Understanding, therefore our Felicity must consist in the Satisfaction of this glorious Faculty.

Euseb. But where shall we chop upon this beatifying Object?

Athymius. The stately Machine of the World will furnish us a large Prospect of Contemplation and Pleasures. I can never contemplate the Beauty of the Firmament, the fine Subordination of the Celestial Orbs, their various, yet regular Circumvolutions, but I find my self in Rapture and Extasy. Sometimes I dive into Causes, and construe *Virgil* by Experience, *Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas*: When my Understanding is pos-
sed, I step over the Difficulty, and am even charm'd with my Ignorance; for a *Nonplus* has its Satisfaction,
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and there is a Charm in knowing we are ignorant of something.

Enfeb. This Contemplation is indeed a handsome Diversion, but a lean Felicity; and I am apt to think it's far more capable to puzzle than to content; for, alas, we survey those Objects that are at hand through Mists, and those that are remote through false Prospectives: So that our Ignorance extends wider than our Knowledge, and our Intellect is rather harass'd with Doubts, and alarm'd with Suspicions, than regal'd with staunch Demonstration. Now, I suppose, Ignorance rather frets the Understanding than satiates it; Doubts rack it, and Suspicions clap it on the Torture: How then can this fine Contemplation you talk of lay asleep all our Desires, and place us in a State of Repose?

But, 2dly, If Hunger ravage my Stomach, and Penury my Purse; If I tug at an Oar, will Contemplation silence Appetite? Or fill my Purse? Or knock off my Chains? Alas, Sir, these Miseries fit hard upon a Man in spite of Speculation, and must be removed by some more effectual Means than Knowledge.

3dly, All the World cannot whip and spur for *Oxford* and *Cambridge*; some have no Wit for Studies, some no Inclination, and others no Leisure; Clowns find upon Experiment that Action turns to better account than Speculation, and you will never persuade them to truck the Spade for *Aristotle* or *Archimedes*.

Again, Women, I suppose, may lay some claim to Happiness as well as Men; must they also leave the Distaff to con *Plato* and contemplate Nature, whilst they should make *Bonelace*? I always suppos'd the supream Felicity of every Individual was the same with that of the whole Species; but no, it varies with Constitutions and Employments; and you treat the Sex in *England* with as little Ceremony as the *Bonzees* in *Japan*, who discard them of all Title to Happiness; but this is to postpone the Scripture to *Pomponatius*; to rely more on the Reveries of an Atheistical Pedant, than on the Authority of Jesus Christ.

DIALOGUE X.

The Soul is Immaterial.

Ensch. YOU called for direct Proofs of the Immateriality, I must comply with your Desire.

I.

Man is a free Agent, and by consequence his Soul draws not its Origin from Matter. Sure you will not oblige me to prove a thing so clear, so evident. We experience this Liberty in our Actions; we may continue the present Discourse, or interrupt it: I am not necessitated to speak, nor you to hear me. Upon this Persuasion of Freedom, Commerce is carried on, and Government founded: Who would trust a Neighbour, were he not persuaded Honesty were in his Power? And why should a Murderer leave his Life on a Gibbet if the Crime was unavoidable? In fine, why do all Commonwealths discourage Vice by Punishments, and encourage Vertue by Rewards, but upon this universal Persuasion, that Man is a free Agent? This being promised, I argue thus.

Liberty is a Power to act, and not act, when all things pre-required for Action are ready; for no Creature can be conceived free that is antecedently determined to one side of a Contradiction. Now if there be a Power in Man, that can suspend an Action, when all things pre-required are present, its Action depends not upon any Disposition either in the Object or Organ; and by consequence, it must be independent of Matter; but if the Action be independent, the Power it self must be so also; for no Operation can be more perfect than its Cause.

If you say the Will is not determined by it self, but by the Charms of some apparent Good, or some material Dispositions *in or without* the Organ, you overthrow the very Notion of Liberty; for then it can no more abstain from Action, than the Eye, when all things necessary for Vision are present. Seeing therefore Man is supposed free, and that Freedom is incompatible with a Determination that proceeds from any previous Disposition in Matter, yet we must conclude it determines it self, and by consequence, is independent of Matter, (*i. e.*) Immaterial.

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To expose this Truth in a greater Light, do we not sometimes mortify the Inclinations of Flesh, and hold in the Tendency of Appetite? How many tie up their Bodies to Chastity in spite of Sollicitations? Suppress the Sallies of Intemperance by Abstinence, and of Drunkenness by Sobriety? Now if the Soul depends on the Body, it cannot baulk its Inclinations: Can a Horse restrain Appetite when he stands at a full Manger, and fast in the Presence of Provinder? Alas, poor Creatures, their Souls and Bodies are made of the same Stuff; and so *those* have no Superiority nor Jurisdiction over *these*: In all their Flights and Pursuits they follow the Direction of Sense; whatever glides smoothly upon the Organ, the Soul embraces, and whatever grates upon it, raises its Aversion.

What material Disposition could force St. *Lawrence* rather to broil on a Grid-Iron, than to apostatize from his Religion? They all banded against his Resolution; Sense persuaded him to relent, and his Body sunk under the Violence of Torments; yet his great Soul was deaf to the Clamours of Sense; it sacrific'd the Body to conserve its Innocence. You may as soon persuade me that Ice can burn, and Fire freeze, as that a material Principle can thus act contrary to the Dispositions of Matter; but St. *Lawrence* did, and Thousands besides; therefore there is in Man a Principle that determines it self, and consequently independent of Matter.

2.

If the Soul be material, all Pleasure must be conveyed unto it by the Channel of some Sense; no agreeable Perception can come at it, but by the Mediation of corporeal Organs; but the Soul is capable of Delight, that has no Influence on Sense, that resides wholly in the Understanding; thus the Discovery of a Truth distracted *Archimedes*, and he demonstrated himself almost out of his Wits; he was not able to bear the Impression of Joy, but over-set with the affecting Charms of his casual Discovery, he leap'd out of the Bath, and ran naked through the Streets, without any Regard to Age or Decency.

Now, what plunged this Mathematician's Soul into such an Ocean of Delight? Nothing but a new found Truth, so proper to the Understanding, that no Sense could pretend any Share in it; it came not within the Reach

Reach of the Eye, or Smell, it was too airy to be fingered; and I believe a Thousand Demonstrations, though never so high seasoned, would prove a meager Regale to the Palate. Seeing therefore a material Soul can receive no agreeable Sensation, but from an Impression stamp'd on some Sense; and that the Pleasure of *Archimedes* was not the Object of any Sense, we must conclude it resided in the Soul, without Dependence on any Sense, and by consequence that his Soul was immaterial.

Athym. These are a pack of *Hackney* Arguments, and sent upon all Expeditions; they are a kind of *enfants perdus*, exposed in every Rencontre; but after all, they are more fit for Appearance than Service. I have not time, at present, to discover their Weakness; in the mean time, supposing the Soul immaterial, Why must it be immortal?

Enseb. The Arguments I propose are ordinary indeed, and lie in every Man's Way, but they are not less concluded, because obvious; all may understand them, but no Libertine can answer them. You ask me why, from Immateriality, I infer Immortality? Give me leave to put this Question; is the Mass of Matter, that makes up the World, naturally Eternal?

Athym. Yes.

Enseb. Can you prove it?

Athym. Philosophers, if I am not mistaken, prove it thus; God, as Author of Nature, never withdraws his Hand from any Creature, but at the Exigence of some contrary Agent. Now Matter has no Contrary; all the operative Qualities in Nature reside in Matter, and though they fall out among themselves, it enters not into the Quarrel, bending to neither side, it's a Friend to all. In fine, being the common Subject of Contraries, it can be opposite to none, and there lies out of the Reach of Corruption.

Enseb. I receive your Reason, but then it answers your Query; for if the Soul be Immaterial, it must be Spiritual; there is no Mean between these two Extreams. It cannot be an Accident: For it's agreed on all Hands, that Man is a substantial Compound; therefore the most noble Ingredient must be a Substance. Such is his Soul, without doubt, for this entitles him to Reason, and seats him above the Herd. The Soul therefore is a spiritual Substance; (*id est*) a Spirit: Now, no material Agent
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can act upon a Spirit, because it can have no Opposition to it; therefore, seeing nothing in Nature requires its Destruction, it naturally requires to exist as well as Matter.

Indeed, as God gave it a Being, so he can at Pleasure recal the Gift; but then he must act as Sovereign, not as Author of Nature; for in this Quality he never withdraws his conserving Influence, but at the Exigence of some contrary Agent; now the Soul having no contrary, God as the Author of Nature must conserve it Eternally.

Athym. Your Arguments, though obvious, make (I confess) some Impression, and though they do not convince, at least they persuade, but the Resemblance between Men and Beasts hangs cruelly in my Head; they are so like, that methinks they must be made of the same Ingredients: Their Species is propagated by Generation, they grow up by Degrees, and receive Nourishment and Increase from Meat and Drink; ill Usage heats their Passions, Kindness cools 'em; they Hear, See, Smell, and Taste, and regulate their Actions by the Senses; they lie open to Diseases, and at last sink under Age or Malady; is not this an exact Picture of Man? Does he not make as ignoble an Entrance into the World, and as shameful an Exit, as the vilest Insect? He rolls in Ordure nine Months, and then salutes the Light with Tears and Clamours; he begs a Livelihood of all Creatures, and courts the very Beast for Sustenance and Cloathing; Passions grow upon him with Years, Age instills Vigour, and Malice sets them on Fire; his Brutality vies with that of Bears; and his Cruelty out-runs the rage of Lions; he is furnish'd with Senses as well as they, and gives himself over to their Direction: If Beasts languish under Diseases, is Man exempt from the Inconvenience? They both struggle with Distempers, dispute their Post, and then surrender to Death, and what remains but breathless Carcasses. *Alexander* and *Bucephalus* lie on the same Level, the Dust of the Emperor has no Privilege above that of the Horse. Seeing therefore Beasts are Mortal, why must we invest Man with Immortality? A Resemblance of Operations supposes a Likeness of Principles; and when the Effects are equal, it's against Reason to make the Causes unequal.

Euseb. In

Euseb. In the first place, your Argument proves as strongly the Immortality of Beast's Souls, as the Mortality of Man's.

Athym. Nay, then I'll forswear disputing.

Euseb. Would all Gentlemen take the same Resolution, Religion would be more regarded among us, and the Civil Government less divided; for whosoever disputes Articles of Faith believes none; and it's a general Remark, that those who eternally enter upon Controversy, give more Evidence of Infidelity than Wit: This is (if I am not mistaken) your Argument; there is a most perfect Resemblance between Men and Beasts; both as to the Necessity of dying, and to all the apparent Sequels of Death; but Beasts die entirely, therefore Men die entirely.

Athym. It is.

Euseb. Let us now turn the Tables; *There is a most perfect Resemblance between Men and Beasts, both as to the Necessity of Dying, and to all the apparent Sequels of Death; but Men die not entirely, therefore Beasts die not entirely.*

Athym. Under Favour, you obtrude a wretched Sophism for a staunch Reason; my Argument stands upon an avowed Principle, whilst yours supposes the Question we contend for: It's agreed on both sides, the Souls of Beasts are Mortal; if therefore there appear an exact Conformity, between them and Men, in the whole Series of their Life, and Sequel of their Death, I may very Philosophically infer Men's Souls are Mortal, seeing we both agree those of Beasts are; but you cannot conclude the Immortality of Beast's Souls from that of Men, for this lies under Debate; we are in quest of this Prerogative, and cannot determine whether Man owes his Claim to Nature, or Flattery, or Vision: The Consequence therefore draws from one contested Antecedent is illegal; it neither helps the Opponent, nor foils the Defendant.

Euseb. The Question is not what I believe, but what you can reasonably conclude precisely from the Resemblance between Men and Beasts. I say, you can no more infer the Mortality of human Souls, than the Immortality of those of Beasts. We see the one and the other die, but the Sense is unable to bring any News of the Soul, though you send them on Discoveries: If you venture up-

on

on a Dissection of their Bodies, you may come at the Distemper that carried them off: But you will meet with no Symptoms of Mortality or Immortality; and therefore standing to the bare Resemblance, your Argument has no Advantage over mine.

But I acknowledge (say you) that the Souls of Beasts are mortal; but then remember, I believe those of Men to be immortal. If therefore you abandon the Resemblance, and cast the Cause upon my Authority, rely upon it in one Case as well as in the other: If it is of no Weight for the Immortality of Man's Soul, why shall it enter into the Proof of the Mortality of Beasts?

If the Reasons with which I establish the Mortality of the Souls of Beasts, prove the Mortality of those of Men, you come up to the Point; in this Case my Reasons might help on your Argument, but not by Authority; but alas, Sir, the Reasons for the one side have no relation to those of the other: Those that maintain the Mortality of Beasts, are foreign to Man, and would remain in their full Strength, though he were not in Being.

To draw to an end, I grant the Souls of Beasts are mortal, and that there is a great Resemblance between them and Men; the Question is, what can be legally inferred from this Similitude? I say nothing, but that all that is animal in Man dies; his Body dies, his sensitive and vegetative Life end, and all those Faculties that depend on corporal Organs, cease with the last Breath. This is a fair Inference, and all Christians receive it; but then it stops at the animal Part of Man, without touching the reasonable, whose Being and Operations have no dependence upon Matter.

But your Reason, as ill as you believe, and your Logick, is of the same Stamp with your Tenet. *Man (say you) resembles Beasts in those Things that are common to both, merely as they are Animals; therefore he resembles in those Things that are proper to him as Man. Again, Beasts die according to the sensitive Life, which is essential to Animals, but Man resembles Beasts in that which is essential to Animals; therefore he dies as to the Rational Life, which is not essential to Animals. In fine, Man is mortal as to his Body, therefore he is mortal as to his Soul. If this be Reason, what is Sophism? To conclude from a Part of the Whole, is a Solecism in Logick; and to attribute to a thing*

thing *absolutely*, that belongs to it merely *per accidens*, is to defy Reason.

In fine, if there be a great Resemblance between some Operations of Men, and those of Beasts, there is as wide a difference between others; if therefore from a Conformity of Actions you infer a Similitude of Principles, pray suffer me to conclude a difference of Principles from the difference of Actions.

I have already thrown before you some human Operations that must proceed from a Principle wholly different from any that is to be found in Beasts; and to go no further, What is there in Beasts that bears any Proportion to the Understanding? It enters into the very Essence, and rifles the most abstruse Recesses of Nature; it defines, divides, and distinguishes; its Motion outstrips the Winds, and its Rapidity distances Lightnings; in a word, it embraces the Poles together, and at one intellectual Grasp, clutches the whole Extent of the Universe. Besides, Man's Soul calls all the material Faculties to Account, and minds the Senses of their Mistakes; it impeaches the Fancy of Folly, and laughs at those Mœrmo's it creates to fright us: If it be of the same Alloy with them, how came it by this despotick Power? Who commissioned it to call them to the Bar, and to pronounce Sentence? View all the Beasts of the Field, and Birds of the Air, and you will not find one whose Soul pretends to any Superiority, to any Jurisdiction over their Bodies; they follow the Guidance of Sense, and believe the Intelligence of Fancy; they correct no Errors, because they perceive none. Survey not their past Actions, nor consult upon the future; for their Souls drawing their Origin from Matter, they derive all their Knowledge from the Senses; and thus in Nature being equal, can exercise no Act of Superiority; for he who corrects must be more knowing than he who is corrected, and he who commands than he who is forc'd to obey. Seeing therefore the Soul of Man commands the material Powers, unmasks the Illusions of Fancy, and the false Reports of Sense, that it Judges of Objects not according to the Representations of corporeal Organs, but of a superior Principle; it must be more Noble than Sense, superior to Imagination, independant of Matter, and consequently Immaterial.

Atbym. Well, Sir, we have waded into the Depth of the Controversy, it's time to retire : Your Arguments look fair without ; at my leisure I will examine whether they are sound within.

Euseb. It's strange that Men who build their Infidelity upon Conjectures will yield to nothing but Evidence : Why so much Caution against Truth, and so little against Error ? Is it so much your Interest to be in the Wrong ? And such a Grievance to be in the Right ? Spend some cool Thoughts upon the Matter ; *Spem ac metum examina*, confront your Hope with your Fear ; examine what you shall gain if your Soul be Mortal, what you will lose if Immortal ? If Immortal you forfeit all ; if Mortal nothing. If therefore the Question were merely problematick, you should stand for that side that promises more and threatens less, *& quoties incerta erunt omnia tibi fave*, if I am mistaken I shall never deplore my Error, nor even perceive it ; but alas, Sir, if you are in the Wrong, you will once discover yours, and always deplore it, but never retrieve your Misfortune.

The Arguments of *Eusebius* made some Impression on the Gentleman, and this short Reflection more ; but the dismal End of that Arch-Atheist *Theomachus* finish'd his Conversion : So that I may say the Gentleman was rather scared than argued into a Sense of his Duty. *Eusebius* received in the nick of time an exact Account of that unfortunate Gentleman's Death from a Friend in Town ; and it's so remarkable in all its Circumstances, that God seems to have permitted it for the Instruction of Posterity, and to convince Libertines, that he not only punishes their Impieties in the next World, but often in this. *Eusebius* read the Letter as follows.

HONOURED SIR,

PERMIT me to interrupt your Retirement with a short Account of a deplorable Accident : Your Antagonist *Theomachus* is no more ; Divine Vengeance has overtaken his Impieties, and made his Punishment no less astonishing than his Crimes ; he left the World a Convert indeed, but not a Penitent : For though he disowned Atheism, he retained the Sin, and delivered himself into the Hands of God's Justice, because he despaired of his Mercy : So that one would think he acknowledged a God merely to provoke him ; for by denying his Mercy

Mercy to be infinite, he forc'd him to exert his Justice, and dared him to damn him, in spite of all his Invitations to Repentance.

That unfortunate Harlot, that sometime before began his Ruin, at length compleated it; so true it is, that the Instruments of our Sins, prove often those of our Punishment, and that we find our Misery in those very things in which we place our supream Felicity: This Creature notwithstanding had nothing extraordinary to recommend her, but the Liberties of a Prostitute, and the Freedom of her Profession; unfurnish'd of one good Quality, she had gleaned up all the bad ones of the Sex: In a Word, if her Face was fair, her Soul was black, her Fore-head of Brass, and her Heart of Steel; However she subdued Theomachus, and maintained her Conquest; he surrendered at Discretion, and to purchase her Favour made over his Heart, his Estate, Reputation, and in the End his Soul also to this Town-filt; for she was no better.

A Friend took Compassion of this poor Gentleman, and suppos'd he might conjure down his Passion, by exposing the Lewdness of his Idol: But alas, Theomachus was not only enchanted with the Charms of her Person, but (what is more incredible) with those of her Vertue: So that for Thanks he returned Curses, and ask'd Satisfaction for the Advice, instead of benefiting himself.

Nay, Sir, (said the Friend) I shall soon make a Bankrupt, if I give good Counsel and pay for it too. I have discharged the Duty of a Friend, if you take me for an Enemy who can help it? My Intention is Friendly, and my Counsel wholesome. Why do you misconstrue that, and turn this into Poison? It's no Injury to tell a Friend he is injured; no Affront to convince him he is affronted; Well, Sir, I abandon you to her Mercy, and I am sure I cannot leave you in worse Company.

Theomachus acquainted his Mistress with the Passage, and envenomed his Friends Discourse with a mortifying Comment; she flew out into all the Extravagances of Passion at the Recital, and would have melted into Water, had not Revenge set all her Humours on Fire. She would by all Means forsooth abandon her Gallant, unless he vindicated her Honour, promulge his Cowardice, and curse his Ingratitude.

I am inform'd this was nothing but Artifice and Stratagem: She had been too prodigal of her Favours, to be nice

of her Reputation, she had long since discharged both Honour and Conscience, and placed her Glory in the very Centre of Infamy. She had plumed poor Theomachus to feather her own Nest, and was now willing to remove him out of the way to make room for fresh Gallants; so that her Enemies Death was the Pretence, and Theomachus is the real Design of her Revenge.

This poor Gentleman had no mind to appeal to the Sword in Defence of his Mistress; he knew her Cause was as bad as his Skill; but however, overcome by her Importunity, he sent a Challenge, and required an Answer; this done, raised more Pity than Anger in his Friend's Breast. Theomachus (said he) has lived her Slave, he has now a mind to turn Knight-errant, and die her Martyr: Tears may indeed wash out her Crimes; but all the Blood in his Veins is unable to restore her Innocence. I have performed the Office of a Friend, he provokes me to add that of an Enemy; he scorns my Counsel, and importunes me for a Stab; but if ill Nature deserves Resentment, it shall not move me to Revenge.

However, Theomachus was on fire, and the Filt blazed it into a Flame; he met his Friend and drew upon him with the Rage of an Enemy, but Fortune declared against him as well as Justice; the Sword slipt through his Lungs, and he speechless to the Ground: He was carried home in a Trance, and every Body supposed he breathed his last; his Miss, who had been Instrumental to his Misfortune, was all Sorrow without, all Joy within; she wept in earnest, but mourned in jest, and indeed her Grief appeared too extravagant to be real: Reason at length returned, and Theomachus with rowling Eyes, and deep Sighs cried out, Where am I? Oh, I burn and freeze, Fire and Ice pass through every Vein; methinks I feel all the Pains of the Damned. I leave Time behind, and stand upon the Brink of Eternity.

What, says a Gentleman, is then the Soul immortal? Is there a Hell to punish Crimes, and a God to inflict the Punishment? I thought the Existence of a God was Vision, and of a future State, Fable and Romance.

Passion (replied Theomachus) concealed those Truths, Death discovers the Heart may be an Atheist, but not Reason. What we earnestly desire, we easily believe: A vehement Passion supplies the place of Demonstration; but now, alas, the Prospect of Death has laid those Vapours, that interposed

terposed between Time and Eternity; the Curtain is drawn, and I take a full Survey of that boundless Ocean without Bottom, without Shore.

The Company over-joyed at this unexpected Conversion, called a Divine to bring him to a perfect Sense of his Duty; he laid before him all the Motives, Charity and Learning were able to suggest, and press'd them home with such a moving Emphasis, that all melted into Tears, besides the unfortunate Gentleman whom they most concerned.

Sir, (said the Divine) your Glass is run; few Moments divide you from Eternity: You stand upon the last Confines of Time, and will either fall into the Torments of the Damned, or fly up into the never-ending Pleasures of the Blessed. Impenitence conveys you to Hell, a hearty Repentance into Heaven; though your Sins are great, God's Mercy is greater; ask Pardon; he will not refuse it; a contrite Soul disarms his Justice, and turns his Severity into Mercy.

The sick Man shewed more Symptoms of Rage than of Repentance at the Discourse, and seemed rather sullen than moved with the Exhortation.

At last, I remember the time (cry'd he with a doleful accent) when those words would have dissolv'd me into Tears, and split my Heart with Sorrow; but now, alas, my Eyes are drier than a Flint, and my Heart more obdurate than Marble: I see my Crimes, and tremble at the Prospect, but cannot detest them.

If you cast one Eye (replied the Divine) on the heinousness of your Sins, pray turn the other to the greatness of God's Mercies; if the one breeds Despondence, the other Hope and Confidence: One I have sinned to the Lord, freed David from the Guilt of Adultery and Murder: The good Thief mounted the Cross a Criminal, and was taken down a Saint; yet one memento mei wrought his change, and raised him from Hell to Heaven. Peter, the Favourite of Jesus Christ, basely disowned his Master, and back'd Apostacy with Oaths and Perjury; yet no sooner did he deplore his Sin, but Christ pronounced his Pardon, and received him into his Favour.

These Instances, Good Sir, (said Theomachus) come not up to my Case; they transgress'd their Duty through Frailty; Humane Infirmary had a greater share in their Falls than Malice; and thus they seem rather worthy of Compassion than Punishment: But I have not only scorned
God's

God's Laws, but flew in his Face; I have defied his Person, and denied his very Being: An infinite Justice must chastise such a flaming Insolence; nay, and will; my Sentence is pronounced, and nothing remains to compleat my Misery but the Execution.

At least (replied the Divine) ask Pardon! To be damned out of a Fear of being damned is extraordinary; God has engaged his Word, he will not refuse his Mercy to those who sincerely implore it: He invites, he solicits you to accept his offer, why will you oblige his Goodness to abandon you to the dismal Resentments of his Fury? Has Hell such Charms? Are his Threats so inviting, and his Promises so frightful?

The Loss of Heaven (answered Theomachus) bolts Darts of Sorrow and Rage through every Artery; and the very Apprehensions of Hell stretches my Limbs upon all the Racks, all the Tortures of the Damned; methinks I feel the dire Embraces of those merciless Flames, and smell the Vapours of Fire and Brimstone. Did I repent, God I know would receive me into his Mercy, but I cannot, I will not. Scarce had he finish'd this desperate Harangue, which moved the Standers-by to Horror, Indignation, and Compassion too; but mustering up all his Forces, he raised himself up, and clasping his Arms about his Mistress's Neck, For thee (said he) alone do I desire to live; in Defence of thy Honour I die, thou hast been my sole Happiness in this Life, and I will have no other in the next. In this Posture expired Theomachus, an unhappy Instance to himself of God's Judgment upon Atheists, but I hope it may prove fortunate to others.

Honoured Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

N. N.

Ensebins read the Letter with Tears, and the Company heard it with Transports of Admiration; all pitied the Gentleman's Misfortune, and blamed his Obstinacy. Well (said Athymius) I see Atheists and Libertines are less satisfied with their Principles than they pretend; they

they will stand for them *usque ad aras*, to the Death-bed, but then when they step into Eternity, they leave them behind. If there be a God in the other World, certainly there is one in this; and if our Souls are Immortal when we die, they are Immortal whilst we live. *Theomachus* swore the Soul into Matter, and hector'd God out of Being, but could never Reason them into Nothing; his Rhodomontadoes ended in Trembling, and his Laughter in Despair. God has left his Punishment a sad *Memorandum* to the Living; I will profit by his Misfortune, and not instruct Posterity by my own.

Ensebius was scarce come to himself; the Letter cast him into a melancholy Contemplation of *Theomachus's* Disaster, and God's severe Justice upon the wretched Gentleman. At length (turning to the Company) *Theomachus* (said he) is gone, and his Death answers the Tenure of his Life; his Pleasures have taken Wing, and what remains but a Coffin for his Body, and a Lake of Fire and Brimstone for his Soul; he fed high (like the rich Glutton) and drunk higher; and as he followed his Example in this World, so has he met with his Punishment in the other, and now cries loud for a Drop of Water to refresh his Tongue, as before for *Champaigne* to oblige Sensuality. Gentlemen! *Vanitas Vanitatum & omnia Vanitas*, all Temporal Enjoyments are vain and trivial, purchased with Pain, possess'd with Fear, and lost with Regret, they disgust a good Man, and are unable to satiate an ill one; they may glide upon the Organ for a time, but cannot smoothe the Heart; they fawn upon the Senses, but always give a stab at parting. There is no Pleasure here but in the Practice of Vertue; this indeed is worthy the Purchase, and will pay Charges with Interest; it raises a Man above Fear, and disencumbers him of all the uneasy Pangs of Desire; it turns a Sinner into a Saint, it gives him in Hand a Title to Heaven, and the Possession in Remainder.

Let us allow some time to cool and sober Thoughts, and not make over our whole Lives to Merriment, that must end in Tears, or unrepented, in never-ending Despair. We walk on uneven Ground, and if we shut our Eyes, every Step leads us to a Precipice, from which there is no Return: If Caution can give no Security, into what an Abyss will Negligence plunge us?

Take

Take up then, Gentlemen, and abandon Lewdness before it abandons you ; turn Necessity into Vertue, and resign *de bonne Grace*, what within some Years you must in spight of Reluctance and Opposition: There is no *Recipe* against Death, no Protection ; its Stroak is sure, and often unforeseen ; it attacks not so much by Violence as Stratagem ; and if it surprizes us unprovided, we are undone for ever, for on this Moment depends an Eternity : It's easy to prevent an Eternal Misery, but impossible (when once we are fallen into Hell) to abate the Flames, or to extinguish them.

Oh the deplorable State of a damned Soul ! To feel *always all* the Evils, and *all together* that can be feared. What Death ! Never to enjoy the least Good that can be desired ? What Life ! To suffer always ! To despair always ! And never to hope, will be the Eternal Employment of a Reprobate ! How little do Gentlemen believe this sad Truth ! How little do they comprehend it ! And this is the Reason they Sin without Fear, without Remorse.

Oh the Folly of Men, who will not believe till Flames consume their Infidelity, but not their Crimes ! Till Repentance proves Unprofitable, and their Misery becomes Eternal !



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